Chief Minister of Bihar had met the Hon. Prime Minister in July, at that time, though, that money of which 25 percent she ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN (Coochbehar): It is not the question of Bihar alone; besides Bihar, it concerns North Bengal and Assam also.

[Translation]

SHRI I.D. SWAMI: So far as sending assessment team for relief is concerned, Central Government is always willing. We shall send the team which will assess there. Then Central assistance will be provided from the national calamity relief fund. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Our notice still stands and we will continue to raise it till the hon. Home Minister gives comes and answers us.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please take it up tomorrow. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (Dhenkanal): Will I get a chance tomorrow? It is a very serious matter. NALCO is being sold. I will take it up tomorrow.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Yes.

...*(Interruptions)*

12.22 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

FLOODS AND DROUGHT IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I have to inform the House that Dr. Sushil Kumar Indora, in whose name item No. 12 regarding discussion under Rule 193 is listed, has requested me to allow Shri Ajay Singh Chautala to initiate the discussion on his behalf. I have allowed Shri Ajay Singh Chautala to raise the discussion. Now, Shri Ajay Singh Chautala.

[Translation]

SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA (Bhiwani): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, today, we are discussing the issues of flood and drought affected areas in the House. What a paradox is that on the one hand there is very serious drought on the other hand life has been badly affected by the devastating flood. Eleven States are suffering from drought whereas in Bihar, Assam, Gujarat, West Bengal and in other States people are dying due to flood. People's lives have been affected and the condition of people is bad. Many people are leaving their places to take shelter at safer places, though many people are still trapped in it. Many people in Gujarat have been killed by this flood. Almost the same situation is prevailing in Bihar. Dozens of people have been killed in Sitamarhi, Muzaffarpur, Madhubani and other districts. Road links has been cut off. Transport system has been disrupted. Delhi, Haryana, Punjab and Rajasthan are facing severe drought. ...*(Interruptions)* I am talking about all the States. In such a situation, people are in big trouble. Whereas 320 districts out of 523 districts in the country are facing acute shortage of water, many other districts are suffering from flood. In such a situation water management specialist of Maharashtra State, Shri Deshradha, who had prepared a report after studying twelve States, was of the opinion that after spending a huge amount on water projects, there was shortage of water in more than 50 percent villages and towns of the country, whereas 80 percent of agricultural land was facing water shortage problem.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Hon. Agriculture Minister is very much here.

Shri Singh, you please address the Chair.

12.30 hrs.

(MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Mr. Speaker, Sir, All the Ministers related to this issue should be present in the House as this matter is very serious. You have accepted this issue ...*(Interruptions)* All the Members of Parliament are present here but the Minister is absent. Now the issue regarding irrigation is being

[Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh]

discussed but the Minister of Irrigation is not present here. I want to say that such instruction should be given to all the Ministers related to this issue should be present here ...*(Interruptions)* Such direction be issued. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the problem of flood and drought is being discussed here. This matter is being discussed here. This matter is also related to the Minister of Irrigation but the Minister of Irrigation is not present here. Besides, you may see the presence of the members of ruling party. It clearly indicates that they are not at all interested in this issue. They are anti farmers. ...*(Interruptions)*

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, please instruct them to be present here. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: The issue you are raising is likely to be replied by the hon. Minister of Agriculture. He is present in this House. Moreover, you have demanded that other Ministers should also be present here. Definitely, I will inquire on this subject from the Government. I will let you know about this matter in a short while.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Gopalganj): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the problem of flood in caused by the rivers of Nepal ...*(Interruptions)* the water causing flood comes from Nepal and it is monitored by the Department of Irrigation but the Minister of irrigation does not bother to sit here. It causes enormous loss. ...*(Interruptions)* Why is he reluctant to sit here? my point is that he should also remain in the House. ...*(Interruptions)*

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to say that the Government should take this matter seriously and the concerned Ministers should be present here. The Government is taking it lightly. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, what are the steps being taken by the Government for the recent flood? Neither the Government is taking this matter seriously nor giving any reply ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Irrigation is coming in a short while..

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, many such irrigation projects from the first Five Year Plan till today are lying pending. It is a very serious matter. The Minister of Agriculture is present here but the Minister of irrigation should also be present here because this matter is related to both the Departments. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: The Ministr of Irrigation is coming in a short while.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have called him. He is coming in a short while. You should not waste the time of the House because today we are discussing a very important matter.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to add to this discussion by saying that from the First Five Year Plan till today. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH (Satna): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Ministers of all the Departments related to flood and drought should be present here ...*(Interruptions)* We should take this matter seriously. In this regard, the Minister of Rural Development's presence is also required here ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: All the Members of Parliament should take keen interest in this matter.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: Please listen we should also be allowed to speak. This is not correct ...*(Interruptions)* All the hon. Ministers should be present here. It is a very important discussion ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, from the First Five Year Plan till date there are 46 such projects which are lying incomplete. It is still more amazing to note that the Government is including the schemes of the First Five Year Plan in the Tenth Five Year Plan. You can very well imagine from this as to how alert and vigilant were previous Governments as well as this Government towards this matter and how much they are caring the people. The way people of the country are affected by the flood and drought, they are dying and are compelled to migrate to other States. In such a situation the Government should take appropriate steps.

The Hon'ble Minister has called a meeting in this regard. He has also called the people from drought affected States but the situation today is the same, and

nothing is going to change. The time till you start the relief work the situation of the drought affected areas will worsen.

I through you would like to urge the hon. Minister to take action immediately in this regard and provide relief and assistance to the drought affected areas. The farmers of the country have sown the seeds after the rain in June but now there is no monsoon rain. In such a situation the crops are dying for want of water. The Dying of crops and these things are not so serious but today in many States, there is no drinking water for animals. In such a situation, arrangement of water should be made immediately.

The Meteorological Department of the country is of the opinion that there has been normal rainfall in the country since 1988. Fifteen years have passed since then and there was delay in the monsoon this year. People of the country started crying for water, people stated performing and made every possible effort at their own levels. This uncovered the real picture of our schemes. So much money is spent on solving the problems of the country but by that no problems is solved. Instead of that, the money so allocated is misappropriated and he problems remain pending. For example, I would like to say that Delhi Water Board chalked out a plan of Rs. 200 crores for drinking water in the unauthorised colonies. This amount of Rs. 200 crore was to be spent for their assistance on laying pipelines and other arrangements but the major part of the fund has been used for other works and the work for which the fund was allocated has been ignored. In Delhi also the situation is very bad. If this problem is properly managed in the country, the plans are property chalked out and implemented by the National Flood Commission to assist the drought effected areas, we can get rid of this problem.

I represent the Bhiwani area of the State of Haryana in Lok Sabha. There is also drought situation. There is shortage of drinking water for the animals in winter but the Government of the State is well aware and alert. The Government of the State is making all kinds of arrangements there, when the situation in Haryana was alight then Haryana helped the adjoining States by all means in the time of natural calamities. The Chief Minister of Haryana Choudhari Om Prakash Chautala helped the adjoining Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh by supplying fodders fro the animals. But today Haryana, itself is facing the drought. I, through you, want to urge the Government that they should take the effective steps immediately so that the people can get rid of this problem.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR (Mayiladuturai): Mr. Speaker, Sir, after fourteen years of regular rainfall we are facing very dangerous situation. There is danger not only of drought but also of famine. The question therefore arises that whether the Government is ready to face this situation. Whether we are ready and whether the country is ready. Last time when such a serious situation arose, in the year 1987 when Hon'ble Rajiv Gandhiji was our Prime Minister. At that time Rajivji has converted this challenge into a chance. I have before me the economic survey of 1987-88 and I would like to quote two sentences from it. That year the following was stated in the economic survey in regard to 1987:

[English]

> "The country, this year, experienced poor rainfall for the fourth year in succession. The South West monsoon rainfall in 1987 has been the poorest as compared to the last few years and even as compared to severe drought years in the past. As many as 21 of 35 meteorological zones suffered deficient and scanty rains."

[Translation]

The Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi toured throughout the length and breadth of the country to assess the challenge put forth before the country. Wherever there were drought affected areas, whether they are Rajasthan or Gujarat, or Tamilnadu, or Jammu-Kashmir or Nagaland he himself went driving the car on shabby roads in the drought affected areas, he discussed with the people and come to know about what is happening in the country. He seldom came to the house visiting the country instead. He instead of talking to the experts, talked to the affected people and after talking to them he decided about the next course of action.

I, myself want to say that whether the present Prime-Minister can do such a thing or not? I admit that the age of our present Prime Minister is double the age of Rajiv ji and therefore it may be that he may not travel as Rajivji had done. But what can we expect this from our younger Agriculture Minister as was done by Rajivji at that time. Whether hon. Ajit Singh will do the same as Mr. Rajivji did? As far as the House is aware Shri Ajit Singh dances like a peacock on the banks of river Yamuna. He travel in his home state which is the green belt of the country, but no body knows whether he had visited this drought affected area.

Rajivji did not go to the drought affected areas because of his desire travel, there he prepared the programmes so that we can combat drought. That year he prepared so many programmes for combating drought

[Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar]

and it is very necessary to mention about them here. As far as I remember I do not want to say because you know that I was with him at that time but because whatever has been mentioned in the economic survey, that I would like to quote here. I am not reading it but I am referring only to the programmes mentioned therein.

[English]

> "Detailed strategies were worked out for individual crops, regions and watersheds. Appropriate technological practices were devised for each region and adequate quantity of quality seeds was made available to ensure that in the *rabi* season, there would be no seed shortage. Cultivation of short duration cash crops was undertaken wherever possible.
>
> Various employment generation programmes were supplemented by scarcity relief measures and additional foodgrains were released every month to support these programmes.
>
> In Rajasthan alone about 11 lakh persons were covered by these special employment programmes and an attempt was made to rotate this employment between families to ensure that all affected families were covered.
>
> For irrigation, the Central Government made an extra allocation of Rs. 236 crore to accelerate the execution of selected irrigation projects in drought areas alone."

[Translation]

In this year's budget only Rs. 370 crores have been earmarked for irrigation for the development programmes of Medium, Minor and command areas and at that time Rs. 236 crores which was more than additional Budget has been provided for the irrigation. Again when there was programme of emerging 2.27 lakh pump sets in the Five Year Plan, 6.35 lakh pump sets were energised within that one year. As regards fodder, as there was no sufficient fodder in Gujarat and Rajasthan, a message was communicated throughout the country that wherever fodder is available, that should be collected and supplied. For that special arrangements were made with the cooperation of railways that fodder should be dispatched to Rajasthan and Gujarat from Kashmir and Tamilnadu and as the State Governments were not having sufficient sources so additional sources were provided in advance so that there should not be any problem in implementing all the programmes. Besides this there are many other essential commodities like Paddy, edible oil, milk, milk powder, butter etc. for which full arrangement was made to provide these commodities to the people. During that one year 5600 PDS outlets were opened in those areas where people were drought affected and there was a new programme like mobile PDS units which were introduced to move into the drought affected areas so that essential commodities should be provided at the door step of the people affected by drought. In that year additional amount of relief of Rs. 1798 crores was provided as a relief measures and out of that the share of the centre was Rs. 1056 crore out of about Rs. 1800 crores that were given as relief, the burden or Rs. 1500 crores was shared by the Central Government. Rajasthan received so much relief in those four years which was not received in the last forty years. Such programmes were introduced.

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA (Mumbai, North East): Which Government was ruling at that time? ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Healthy discussion is going on. You may please sit down.

[English]

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): Will the hon. Member yield for a minute? ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will not allow you to speak. Please sit down.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: He is misleading the House. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You can speak when your turn comes.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Are you yielding to him?

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Sir, the hon. Member has misled the House when he mentioned that the present Prime Minister had not toured any of the drought-affected areas. In his capacity as the Leader of the Opposition earlier, he toured the drought-affected areas of Orissa and other States.

Sir, any Government, which is ruling the country will have to go as per the advice of the Relief Board ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I do not want a discussion to take place like this. How can you do this?

[Translation]

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: At that time a new programme was introduced as a model namely-National

watershed for development programme for rainfed areas and for drought affected areas coarse grain policy and in Technology mission DPAP and DPPP etc. were the programmes that were launched. Thus one more programme was launched, the name of the programme was

[English]

Separate strategies for each distinct agro-climatic region to suit the requirements of agricultural development specific to that region.

[Translation]

I would also like to mention one more thing as it will indicate that it is not just to play politics to counter the national problem and the Prime Minister of the country, and not any ordinary Minister, has very creatively countered the problem by paying his personal attention. I would like to explain you about its result. I was mentioning the year 1988-89. In this year agricultural production was increased by 15 percent. For the first time, in the same year i.e 1988-89 GDP in National income was increased by about 10.87. I would like to know from the Minister of Agriculture that in order to tackle the problem of the drought what steps are proposed by him to be taken? It is a matter of grave disappointment and it is a fact that since 1991 till today for the last ten years, the average rate of rain fall has been more than 90 percent every year, Even when our agriculture production increased, but as if today we are still at the same place. If we see agricultural growth rate in coarse foodgrain, pulses, oilseeds, cotton, silk, after every year we are still at the same place where we were before the rain fall. We do not have good rainfall and this Government cannot do anything. When God has decided that there will be no rainfall, then what can this Government will do. We are here to know this. We want to know what will this Government do to solve this problem? This is a big challenge. You are definitely neglecting agriculture. I am levelling the allegation on you that you are neglecting agriculture. I am saying this because if you see the budget of 2002-2003 then you will find that the integrated programme made for oilseeds, pulses, maize and plam oil, I do not understand how can you make one programme for these four different things but for the programme that you have made you are going to spent Rs. 150 crores out of the total budget.

However, it is 7% of the total expenditure of the office of the hon'ble Minister. The integrated programme is only for the foodgrains produced in drought affected areas. The special production programmes like special Food Production Programme. Foodgrains Production Programme for pulses, maize, oil seeds and other various programmes launched during Rajiv Gandhi's regime, have been discontinued. No new programme has been started in place of that while the country is facing a serious problem of drought. As such, what steps the Government propose to take in this regard. May be, the hon'ble Minister himself or his colleague Shri Sethi Saheb who has delayed this work, would tell us that the National water policy unveiled in April, 2002 states that

[English]

One of the most crucial elements in development planning is water.

[Translation]

Though initially it was stated that water is essential for country's development but Sethi Seheb himself knows how much funds have been allocated for the development of medium, minor and command areas. Only Rs. 370 crores have been allocated for this purpose. Whereas our budgetary provision is more than Rs. 3 lakh crores. Just compare it. A sum of Rs. 370 crore for minor, medium and command area development have been provided though the total budgetary provision is of 3 lakh crore rupees. Sir, it means only 0.1 percent of allocated funds have been provided. At least 15 crore people of the country are facing drought and only 0.1 percent funds are being allocated for them. The rest 99.9% funds are spent elsewhere. What kind of policy is this? What are the priorities of the Government? How can we rely on the Government when such a serious national problem is before us? Will the Government take needful action in this regard?

Hon'ble Minister of Water Resources may please clarify that is it not true that recently World Bank in its report has stated that the country has suffered a loss of 75 thousand crores in the absence of water arrangements. How can we rely upon such Government?

Besides, lastly, I would like to submit that during his tour to drought affected area he saw that the condition of the farmers was pitiable but the condition of agricultural labourers was worse. Keeping in view the condition of the farmers, Shri Rajiv Gandhi constituted National Commission for rural labour. Where is the report of that Commission? This Government has constituted one more commission for the benefit of their capitalist friends by removing labourers from their jobs.

[Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar]

13.00 hrs.

But Shri Ajit Singh ji, at least, please do not follow Shri Yashwant Sinha or Shri Jaswant Singh. It's a good thing that he himself belongs to a farmer family. Please take care of the interests of agricultural labourers and tell this House about the steps likely to be taken by the Government to improve their condition.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, my last demand to hon'ble Minister of Agriculture is that he should not reply like Deputy Prime Minister. Rather, he should explain clearly about the steps proposed to be taken by the Government for the people who depend on agriculture and looking towards clouds. As Agriculture Minister, will he take care of us also. Though we do not have much expectations from him even then, we express our grievances and are ready to listen him. Please do not adopt the tactics of Shri Advani.

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN (Vidisha): Mr. Speaker, Sir, my learned friend Shri Manishankar Aiyar was saying that the then Prime Minister Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi had toured the country extensively in 1987 when the country was facing severe drought. However, I would like to tell him that since his childhood, Shri Atal ji has spent all his life in the villages of this country and is well aware of all the aspects of village life. He knows the reality of rural life, Shri Ajit Singh belongs to a farmer family and is very well aware of the condition of the farmers. Therefore, he dose not need to tour the villages specially. He often tour the villages whenever required. I want that this discussion should not be end in the allegations and counter allegations. Today the country is facing a crisis. The rainy season has arrived but till now even drizzling has not occurred. It seems God rain 'Indra' is displeased with us. Fields have been dried up. It affects the life of a farmer and his family also. Moreover, it ceases the future of his children. Several States of our country are not only facing drought but three of our States are under the grip of flood.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I hail from a farmer's family. I am aware that once the farmer's crop is damaged, it becomes difficult for him to lead his life for the next five year. He takes loan to sow the crop. When his crop is damaged, how will he repay the loan. Then he takes loan for bread and butter to his family and purchase seeds and fertilizers from the loan and in this way this vicious circle goes on. Farmer borns in debt, lives in debt and even dies in debt. Such is the condition of farmers. I would like to thank the hon'ble Minister of Agriculture for convening a meeting of Agriculture Ministers of 11 States. In that meeting he asked them to defer the debt recovery from the farmers. The orders in this regard have already been issued. But it is not sufficient under such circumstances. State Government recovers this loan adding the interest accruing on it in the next year. The interest on debt goes on accumulating which ultimately forces the farmers to commit suicide. Therefore, deferment of debt recovery will not serve the purpose. If not the whole amount, at least, interest should be waived off. I hope that farmers will get relief form this only, otherwise there will be no use of providing relief to them.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Chautala ji was saying that today out of 524 districts, 320 districts in the country are in the grip of drought. Out of 34 sub-divisions, 25 are facing severe drought. The figures furnished during yesterday's meeting of Agriculture Minister of 11 States show that coarse grain was produced on 126 lakh hectare of land during last year. However, this year it has been produced only on 75 lakh hectare. Last year oil seeds was sown on 90 lakh hectare of land which has declined to half of it during this year. I hail from Madhya Pradesh where soyabean is produced on a large scale. Shri Lakshman Singh ji is also aware that earlier 51 hectare land in Madhya Pradesh was under soyabean cultivation but this year it has been reduced to 18 lakh hectare only. I am giving the figures of soyabean cultivation which has been sown. After sowing. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH (Rajgarh): Please ask the hon'ble Agriculture Minister to visit Madhya Pradesh.

MR. SPEAKER: You please sit down. Such a meaningful discussion is going on, please let him speak.

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN: This is what my complaint. Hon'ble Minister will reply in this regard. I was telling about sowing. The Meteorology Department had predicted of a good monsoon and normal rainfall. The announcement in this regard was made on TV, radio and newspapers. The farmers believed in it and pre-monsoon rainfall at some places strengthened their belief and they sowed the seeds. However, some of them germinated and became plant but before that they began to dry up. If there is rainfall, it would not be helpful in any way as kharif crop has already damaged and I am afraid that the future of Rabi crop is also dismal if it does not rain. Therefore, through you, I would like to congratulate the hon'ble Minister of Agriculture for the immediate steps taken by him. All efforts have been made to provide seeds and fertilizers to farmers. Efforts have also been made for the payment of outstanding amount of Rs. 1000 crore to sugarcane growers and to provide

drinking water facility in far-flung areas. The issue of fodder and straw for animals has also been considered. However, there is a need to take long term measures in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, discussion on waiving of farmer's loan was also going on. I would like to thank the hon'ble Prime Minister because he is the only Prime Minister since independence who has understood the sufferings of farmers and formulated a comprehensive crop insurance scheme. But today there is a need to make comprehensive amendment in this scheme. It is an optional scheme. Many a States have not implemented it and wherever it has been implemented, many anomalies cropped up there. I would like to request you that crop insurance scheme should be made mandatory for every State. Shri Lakshman Singh is present here. Crop Insurance Scheme has been implemented in Madhya Pradesh. Many kind of Natural Calamities have occurred in my area. Sometimes there is hailstorm and sometime floods destroy the crops.

When the farmer take loan from co-operative banks and other banks, the amount of premium is deducted but not even a single penny has been paid to them as compensation. Whenever such an issue is raised, I feel pained as to what is the benefit of formulating such schemes.

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH: You have said that the Government of Madhya Pradesh, has not extended help. Last year, the Government of Madhya Pradesh had demanded 253 crore rupees from the Union Government but you did not even pay 253 rupees. ...*(Interruptions)* How much amount has been paid? Please explain.

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN: In the very beginning I had said that we should not conclude this discussion merely by levelling allegations and counter allegations. I was urging that Crop Insurance Scheme is incomplete. When we discussed about it with the concerned officials that the entire crop of farmers has been perished then why shouldn't he be paid compensation? Then we were told that they neither consider the farmers as a unit nor do they consider the village as a unit but they consider the tehsil only as a unit. If the entire crop of a farmer has been perished, he will not be paid compensation. If the crop of the village has perished then too they will not get the compensation. If more than 60 percent crop of a tehsil has perished only then the compensation will be paid. If the entire crop of a farmer is perished then he should pray to God and perform yagna and havan to wish that the crop of the entire tehsil should be perished because unless or until the crop of the entire tehsil is perished, he will not get the compensation. I fail to understand that what sort of schemes the bureaucrates formulate? I am endeavouring to rise above the party politics and any trying to express the pains of the farmers here. Not only Lord Indira is angry with us, we have been betrayed by the Meteorological department also. Time and again it was announced that there will be normal monsoon. First of all it was declarled that Monsoon is arriving by 20th June, later on it was announced that monsoon expected to arrive by 30th June and then it was said that it is arriving by 10th July positively and then again it was stated that it will arrive 20th July. The farmer went on believing and went on sowing seeds and pouring fertilisers but it did not rain. My submission to the hon. Minister for Agriculture is that the meteorological department has a technical and big set up. There are several scientists. Please analyse its functioning. Even the Ghag and Bhandri used to make better forcast than this. They used to guess on the basis of symbols and farmers used to make their future planning accordingly. Bhandri used to say:-

"SHUKRAWAR KI BADRI RAHE SHANISHCHAR CHHAY
TO YON BOLE BHANDRI BIN BARSE NA JAI"

Various such syings used to be true. So there is a need to ponder over the functioning to the meteorological department.

Not only the farmer is in trouble today. If the crop is perished then not only the farmer is ruined but the agricultural labourers are also rendered unemployed and they also suffer. The labour does the work of sowing paddy and soyabean. At this juncture he works to earn the bread for the remaining rainy season but when the farm is dried up where from the labourers get their wages they start migrating towards cities. The pressure on villages start decreasing but builds up on the cities. Pollution increases, new diseases come up, starvation grows and unemployment increases and due to this the labourer finds himself in trouble. Today not only the labourer is in trouble but the fact is that there is no fodder for the cattle. Ajay ji was saying that then such sort of crisis occurs in other States, fodder is sent from Haryana. Today 12 States including Haryana, where fodder was available are drought affected as a result of which the farmers who used to go for animal husbandry are compelled to sell their cows, buffalows and oxen. When crop is ruined once, it, affects the whole economy. The economic growth has been 5.4 percent last year. The Prime Minister was saying that we want to increase it upto 6 percent. If crop is not good then there will be

[Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan]

slow down in economy since the biggest consumer in our country is the farmer. The agricultural labourer is also a consumer. When he has money, it goes in the pocket of the trader. If the goods of the trader is sold, he picks up more food from he factory which runs the factory. When the factory runs the capital is built up. When capital builds up new factories are set up and employment opportunities are opened. If the farmer does not have money, the goods of the traders will not be sold. If the goods are not sold, the factories would not run which will cause a slow down in the economy and gradually the whole economy will be sick. Therefore, I would like to urge that this issue is concerned not only with the farmers but with the whole nation.

I would like to submit to you that the hon. Minister has made certain immediate efforts and comprehensive efforts are needed. We need cooperation from all quarters but we have to think over the point as to what causes drought, why it happens. Unless and until we do not find out the actual causes of drought I think we would not be able to frame any long term plan in this regard. You might have noticed that there has been no clear cut water policy, water collection and conservation policy in our country since the last 25 years. It is mentioned in the Athar Veda that drought can be prevented through the collection and conservation of water but we have failed in making proper arrangement for water collection and water conservation in the last 54 years. I would like to ask Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar ji as to why the successive Governments of India did not frame any compact water policy.

Sir, our forefathers were wise people, they might not be eminent scientists but you would have noticed that in ancient times there were ponds, wells, small pits filled with water in the villages. These were ponds in every village. In many villages more than one ponds were inexistence and those too were of bigger size. Many of you might have been Bhopal. In Bhopal there is Bada Talab and Chota Talab. The Bada Talab of Bhopal is small in size but another pond which is bigger than the first one was constructed by Raja Bhon and is spread over in a huge area and it was like a dam. People used those ponds for taking bath and meeting out their water requirements. The water needed for rest of the works was also met by the ponds. Wells of the villages were filled up with water as the ponds had enough water and in such a situation the potable water from wells were available and water conservation was done by ponds but what is the situation today. Areas of ponds have been encroached upon, buildings have been constructed or many people are cultivating the land. Our administrative officials were not firm to counter them and at times we submit ourselves for the sake of vote bank and who is to invite enemies unnecessarily and why to make these people our adversaries. In this way by giving up the land of ponds we extinguished ponds wells and other sources also. There was no arrangement for water conservation but we ensured the drilling of water. We fitted hand pumps and drilled tubewells we drilled out so much of water but did not do anything for water conservation. That is why in past water level was available at 10-20 feet beneath earth's surface, but today while drilling hand pumps in every State people know that 300-400 feet drilling has to be done to get the water level in the well. We went on drilling water but did not consume it water level is gradually receding. This is a subject of serious concern not for our country only but for the whole world.

I would like to request the hon. Agriculture Minister and the entire House to enact a law if it is necessary to have a central law, regarding maintaining the level of water to a certain level.

Just now Chautalaji was saying that irrigation projects of the First Five Year Plan are still incomplete. We have a vast network of rivers in our country. They are the Ganga, Sindhu, Kaveri, Yamuna, Saraswati, Ravi Mahanadi, Godhavari, Barahmputra etc. They have their tributaries also and many small rivers emerge from these rivers. Many nullah merge with small rivers. Mani Shankarji is a learned man. He can give figures. But I can only tell you that the water of these rivers flow into the sea without any use. We have not made any arrangement to store and make use of the water which flow into the sea. I would like to know the reasons for non-completion of construction work of dams and irrigation projects which started in the First, Second and Third Five Year Plans. It is a matter of shame that even after 54 years, they have not been completed. I am not alleging any political party but it is a matter of shame for the entire House.

I would like to tell you as to how the plan of big dams are made and how they are implemented. I belong to Vidisha. There are two irrigation projects for two districts of Vidisha, one is Vaha and the other is Sagar. After spending thousands of rupees on the construction work of these projects, now, the forest and environment Department has put objections. There is no coordination between these departments. I came to this House as an elected Member of Parliament for the fourth time. Since 1991 I have been approaching the Minister of Central Govt., and Minister of Irrigation and Forest in the State Govt. and Collectors but the formalities have not been completed so far.

They said that there are the formalities which have to be completed. From there, I rush to Delhi, A letter is issued from this end. The letter goes to the Secretary of the State Govt., and the Secretary sends it to the Chief Engineer, Chief Engineers sends it to the Executive Engineer. He sends it to the SDO. Then SDO and sub-Engineer prepare some letter and thereafter they send it back to this end which takes almost an year to reach here. I have tried my best but I could not get the schemes approved. Had these projects been completed, the problem of drought in Vidisha district would not have arisen. It is not a calamity for Vidisha alone but for the whole country.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, at the time of elections new irrigation projects are formulated and our leaders perform Bhoomipuja, lay foundation stones and they make false promises that foundation stone of irrigation projects have been laid and now their fields would be irrigated. Sir, you know the fact of these foundation stones very well. How long such things will go on. The need of the hour is to store the water and tanks and small check dams be constructed. There is no need to construct big dams and wherever electricity is generated, dams should be constructed according to the requirement of power generation. Big dams may cause tragedies of serious consequences. It takes lot of time to complete, its construction, it requires large amount of capital investment, larger chunk of land get submerged, a vast population is displaced and severe damage to the environment is caused and for all this little relief is provided. Therefore, it is necessary to give priority to the construction of small dams so that the water of the village can be stored in the village itself. For this check dams and stop dams should be constructed.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I got an estimate prepared for the construction of an embankment at Betwa river in Vidisha and you would be surprised to know that the estimate of this embankment was Rs. 25 lakh. I sanctioned this amount and from MP Local Area Development Fund and the level of the water in an area of 9 kilometers would be raised and 13 villages would be irrigated with this water. The wells, tanks, tubewells and handpumps of that area will be revived and with the help of this water the people would be able to irrigate their land and the scheme would be completed in eight months. Likewise, if we formulate small schemes for a limited number of villages for example one, two or five to 10 villages, then it would take less time, lesser capital investment and lesser number of persons would be displaced. In this way we would be able to conserve water and utilize it in a proper way. We would be in a position to suffice the need of water in the village itself.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to request that the hon. Agriculture Minister has mentioned about 'Food for work' He has stated that assistance would be given under "Sampoorn Gramin Vikas Rozgar Yojana, Jawahar Rozagr Smridhi Yojana etc. But they have to decide as to which purpose the funds would be provided. If the fund is utilized for construction of ponds, check dams and stop-dams, then, the water conservation would be done in a proper manner and labourers would get employment. Apart from this the other objectives would also be achieved without fail.

We have to formulate a long term scheme in this regard. Just now Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar was saying that many schemes have been made. This Govt., is also implementing many schemes. There is a scheme for the development of drought affected areas and deserts. There is an integral waterland development programmes. It seems to me that we start many programmes at a time and we create so many departments for the one and the same purpose. Can we not merge all these into one. And formulate integrated long term scheme. Long term schemes are the need of the hour. I would request the hon. Agriculture Minister to coordinate some where and prepare a concrete plan after discussing common men and experts.

Previously also, on the issue of drought and water conservation the Government made several efforts to tackle it. This is not my views. Committees were constituted earlier also. Dr. K.L. Rao Committee and Hassim Committee were constituted and they submitted their report in 1999. We only form committees. Committees are constituted, commissions are appointed and their reports also come but how many, of their recommendations are implemented and how much time it takes, is known to very well. If any such report has been prepared then we should certainly act upon that. We shall have to strive to make all this possible.

The condition of Madhya Pradesh is very grim. 35 districts in Madhya Pradesh are in the grip of drought. Some of these areas are Vidisha, Raisen, Sreelor, Rajgarh, Batool, Hoshangabad, Ratlam, Mandsour etc. My Parliamentary Constituency had witnessed hailstorms last year. The crops of farmers were damaged. Shri Lakshman Singh is saying that the Madhya Pradesh Govt. had provided assistance. But that assistance was not sufficient. Only a chosen few got this assistance and even that was not sufficient only the powerful people took away the lions share. In this way large scale corruption permeated at administrative level. The hailstorm ruined the farmers. They somehow managed to purchase fertilizers and seeds but then they were hit by drought.

[Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan]

My submission is that there is a need to provide assistance to the drought affected areas.

Whenever we raise the issue of waiving of loans of the farmers or some other similar issue is raised, people make lot of hue and cry over that. Specially the bureaucrats and intellectuals say that the Banking System would get disturbed. The farmers would become used to freebies and wrong precedence would be set. But yesterday our Finance Minister while giving figures stated that about Rs. 83 crores are lying outstanding against big industrial houses. So many hindrances are created by NABARD, Reserve Bank and other such institutions when we demand for waiving loans or interest on loans to the farmers.

I remember that when the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shri Sunder Lal Patwa during his tenure, floated a scheme to waive off the loans of farmers in 1990, many hurdles were created. The scheme got cleared after a lot of difficulties and upto ten thousand rupees of farmers were waived off. The total expenditure incurred on this was rupees 710 crore. I mean to say that loans of lakhs of farmers can be waived off in just rupees 710 crore and rupees 83 thousand crore stands outstanding against the industrial group. What to talk of others?

I would like to submit that today the farmers are in real need of help. We need to extend help to the farmers in the present times. Farmers of our country are getting ruined. I would urge upon my colleague, senior leader sitting on the other Bench not to get involved into unnecessary debate. Let us all make efforts to solve this problem, the Government alone would not be able to do it, nor can we do it alone. We shall have to seek help of the common people in order to combat the menace of famine. Such schemes are useless unless there is participation of the common people. Who can solve these problems? We are peoples' representatives and it is our duty to go amongst the people, protect them and create awareness amongst them. The power called 'people' may join hands to combat flood and famine. Things would set right when it takes the form of a mass movement. Everything has been left on the Government that the Government would make schemes. I feel guilty and also hold other political leaders guilty that due to this vote politics, we have always told the common people that it is the Government which would do everything and no one needs to do anything.

I visited a village in 1990 when I became MLA for the first time. About 15 to 20 thousand rupees were spent on my welcome and the villages gave me a red carpet welcome. Later on when they presented their charter of demands, it was mentioned therein that the only source of drinking water in their village, i.e. a well had remained dried since the last three years. This well may therefore be cleaned. I asked then how many rupees were spent on my welcome, they said 15-20 thousand rupees. I asked then how many rupees would be spent on cleaning work of the well, they said 5000 rupees are required for that. I said when they can spend rupees 20,000 in the welcome party of a leader then why not rupees five thousand can be spent on the cleaning work of a well. They said that it is not our job to clean wells, yes of course welcoming a leader is our job, but not cleaning the well, this is Government's job. We shall have to do away with such a thinking of the common people. Unless the people become conscious, we cannot tackle any menace competently. All people's representatives have to make efforts to increase peoples' participation. I can definitely say that the Government alone cannot do anything, they need help of the entire Parliament and the common people. When we all get resolved and stand collectively to combat famine and other natural calamities, only then the things would set right.

I would like to say one thing more that for every effort common people look at the peoples' representatives, so we can take initiative in this regard. All M.Ps. can decide, that if not much, we would give at least one day's of our salary for famine affected areas. If we take this wise initiative, such help would automatically be extended by other parts too, which are not facing this crisis, they would also come to our rescue. With this step, the common people would also believe that we not only deliver mere speeches, but also, from the core of our heart, wish to help the people of our country.

In the end, I would like to say that funds be released by the Government or steps to be taken by the Government need proper monitoring. No doubt lakhs and crores of people suffer when such crisis occurs, but some people feel happy too when such crisis takes place. Country faces famine but these people earn huge sums even under these circumstances. Due to corruption, neither money nor foodgrain in lieu of work could reach the farmer and then we came to know that foodgrain was sold in black market and this money went into the pocket of others. Funds would be received for various schemes in huge amounts but one has to monitor whether the money actually given for common man reaches him and the poor man gets benefit of this, or it goes into the pocket of middle men we cannot leave our people on the mercy of State Governments. It is often said that this is a State subject. It may be, but the States are not in

a condition of disbursing pay even. Many States do not consider it their prime duty to serve their people. The Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh rightly says that elections are not won merely by providing roads or power, infact it is an art, science. And if Laloo Prasad ji can win elections without providing for roads or power. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: Make a habit to listen against Shri Digivijay Singh. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH: I should also come to know where it happened. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN: Entire country knows and it is also published in the newspapers that if Laloo Prasad ji can win elections in Bihar without providing for roads or power, then why not myself in Madhya Pradesh. If the Chief Minister associates everything with elections then six and a half crore people of Madhya Pradesh cannot be left at his mercy. And that is why, I, through you, would request the hon. Minister of Agriculture that the Central Government may extend its full help in this period of crisis and proper arrangements should be made to see that this help reaches the common man. I extend my thanks to you for having given me an opportunity to speak.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (Sambhal): He spoke very well but later on all went wrong.

MR. SPEAKER: Mulayam Singh ji is right. His speech was right but why did he make allegation at the end.

[English]

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA (Kanakpura): Hon. Speaker, Sir, we are discussing about drought and flood. This is a normal feature. There is no need of mixing any politics, particularly on this issue.

In the past 50 years, several programmes have been implemented. Nobody can deny that, I am not going to say that this Government is not concerned about the drought situation or the flood situation that is prevailing in this country. That is why I said that there is no need for mixing politics.

As we have discussed in this very same House, particularly on this issue, every year, in one part of the country there would be droughts and in another part of the country there would be heavy rains, causing a lot of damage to the people who come within those areas. This type of an erratic rainfall has caused both droughts and floods. We have thought over how to have a permanent solution for these issues.

I do not want to say that the previous Government has not made any attempt. When Shrimati Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister, I was the Irrigation Minister in my State. She tried her best to evolve a National Water Policy but no State-I do not want to mix politics here-was prepared to accept some of the issues raised by the Central Government at that time. It was only on the issue of drinking water that all States unanimously accepted the policy. That is the only policy document we were able to produce, having had discussions for three days when Shrimati Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister.

Subsequently, when Shri Rajiv Gandhi became the Prime Minister, I was Irrigation Minister of my State during that period also. He tried his best to make all the States where people were suffering with heavy floods understand how we should tackle the problem. I am talking only about the flood damages. Again, as a result of short-sighted politics, parochial outlook and concern for their own States, nobody was prepared to accept it. There is no water policy. I do know what Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar has quoted. What is that policy? Have we accepted it?...*(Interruptions)* Please hear me. I know a little about that....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL (Latur): There was a New Irrigation Policy made by Shri Rajiv Gandhi. I attended that meeting. It was attended by many Chief Ministers. That Policy was objected to by some Chief Ministers and yet that Policy was adopted and was tried to be implemented.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: I was a witness to the Policy adopted. Every State agreed only to the policy on drinking water. I am sorry, the policy on transfer of surplus water from the surplus basin to the deficient basin was not at all agreed to. Let me be very plain. Nobody was prepared to accept that. Everybody started fighting that if there was water in the surplus basins it was required for their own States. They did not want to allow the surplus water to be carried to the deficient basin. This was the stand taken by almost all the Chief Ministers. You know that the cauvery basin is a deficient basin. I am mentioning this because from among the Chief Ministers who were at that time present at the meeting called by Shri Rajiv Gandhi-you were also there-nobody was prepared to accept that Policy so far as this issue is concerned.

[Shri H.D. Deve Gowda]

Today, during the Question Hour itself, our Bihar friends tried to obstruct the Question Hour and bring up the issue of how floods were affecting them, with the Himalayan rivers bringing a lot of floods. They are also suffering because of floods from the rivers along Nepal border. When Shri K.L. Rao was the Irrigation Minister during the period of Shrimati Indira Gandhi, he proposed a scheme to carry the flood waters from River Mahandi to River Cauvery. Those schemes were submitted during 1992 and they were updated during 1996. I have a copy of all those schemes. I must say that the hon. Prime Minister has taken some decisions so far as the construction of the National Highways is concerned. He has announced a programme to spend about Rs. 60,000 crore, to have a road network connecting all the major cities. Infrastructural facilities are one of the major components so far as National Highways are concerned. I welcome it.

So far as this particular issue is concerned. I think, during my period, I have also appointed a Technical Committee to update what was prepared by Shri K.L. Rao. Subsequently during late Shri Rajiv Gandhi's time also in 1992, it was updated. I had also appointed a Committee and that Committee had given a Report in 1996. I have then got a copy of the Report. The cost of the project may come to about Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 60,000 crore. A number of technicians have given their opinion particularly on how to use the Himalayan water.

Sir, we have a natural wealth in the form of water. But, unfortunately, because of the political conflict and because there is no unanimity among States, the country has to suffer. Water is a natural wealth. This Wealth has to be properly utilised for the welfare of the people. It is not the question of Karnataka, Bihar or Madhya Pradesh. We are not at all concerned particularly about using this natural wealth. It is a God given gift. Can we not come to a conscious decision particularly on this issue? I do not want to quote the figures. How much water we are yet to use? How much irrigation potential we have exploited and how much we have not exploited even after 53 years of Independence? The Report itself says all these things. I do not want to quote all these things.

Sir, all the major rivers have got inter-State water dispute. Madam Shrimati Sonia Gandhi also knows what is Narmada, what is Cauvery and what is between Punjab and Haryana. On all major issues we are unable to tackle the problems. The courts are there; the tribunals are there. I think, with all right earnest, the Union Government might have tried in the past. Even during my period on Narmada, I have called all the four Chief Ministers. I worked out an agreeable formula, which ultimately went to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court gave the same decision based on what we have agreed among the four State Chief Ministers. I do not want to elaborate particularly on these issues.

Sir, what is the natural wealth? I think, it is water. I would like to know whether we should think in terms of nation or in terms of our own State. If water can be treated as a national wealth, then we have to adopt a National Water Policy. Then, the water should be utilised from the surplus basin to the deficit basin. If that could be done, then most of the problems could be sorted out. This is my sincere opinion.

Sir, even now I urge the hon. Prime Minister about it. The hon. Minister of Agriculture cannot take this decision. It is a major decision. If all the Chief Ministers are prepared to agree, if all the States are prepared to agree and if all the political parties are prepared to agree, then we can find a permanent solution in respect of 60 per cent to 70 per cent people who are suffering because of drought. The Reports are there. The Ministry of Agriculture has given these reports, I do not want to read all these things for the purpose of convincing this august House. More than 60 to 65 per cent of the people are suffering today on account of drought. If they want to find a solution, these reports are now with the Government, with the Ministry of Water Resources. If the Prime Minister can take serious interest in the case of construction of highways by providing about Rs. 60,0000 crore, why not here also? I know the resource crunch. Every State which is going to be benefited, can contribute, if you evolve a conscientious decision by calling all the Chief Ministers for linking Mahanadi with Cauvery. So, this is one issue which I would like to stress. Even though there are fractured verdicts on various issues, we have arrived at conscientious decisions on those issues. So, why not on this particular issue also? On this particular issue, there should not be any politics. That is all I want to impress upon this august House.

I can elaborate the temporary measures like water management and all these things. Today, the problem of drinking water is acute because we have made excessive use of the ground water for irrigation purpose, for agricultural purpose and for drinking purpose. Even though we have done enough to provide either the bore-wells or other facilities to provide drinking water, but in most of the villages today, there is no water. The water table has come down., Through bore-wells or pumps, we are

not getting adequate water unless the water table is increased. For that, several measures were taken. To recharge the water table, we have formulated the watershed programme and so many other programmes, but unfortunately, the money that we have spent as an immediate measure, has not been spent properly. The late Rajiv Gandhi had said in this very House that in some schemes for which we give money for their implementation, only sixteen paise reach the beneficiaries at the end point. The very same words were told by the late Rajiv Gandhi in this very House. I am not saying that we are not spending money. We are spending money, but the money is being used improperly and there is no accountability. I know that with my little experience.

Today, what immediate steps we have to take is a major issue on which I would like to express my views. Yesterday, the hon. Agriculture Minister had called a meeting of the Revenue Ministers and Agriculture Ministers of all the four States concerned. They have drawn up certain programme. But my honest and sincere feeling is that there are discriminations from State to State. 'X' State may get more patronage, 'Y' State may not get as much patronage because of political considerations. I am not going to find fault with you, friends, because in a situation like this, you have to satisfy your allies. There are certain patronages only to save the Government. I can understand that and for that, I am not going to blame them. What can they do if the country is facing such a situation? Karnataka had submitted a report last time for Rs. 900 crore financial assistance. Has the Centre given even one rupee? My Congress friends should not mistake me if I say that we are facing a lot of financial problem. I am not blaming the ruling party. They have to spend money on various other problems.

Giving money from the Calamity Relief Fund is not any special favour. Based on the report of the Finance Commission it has already been fixed as to how much each State should get. It is not any special favour if the Government of India is going to provide about Rs. 75 crore to Karnataka. It is not a special favour. Even that amount is not fully released. I do not want to make a charge. But why is this so? Various types of financial support is given to some of your Allies and others who are in office and the same situation is not prevailing in other States.

Sir, when you were the Chief Minister, did I discriminate? I was there as Prime Minister for only ten months. Your goodself had telephoned to me saying you wanted to bring a delegation so far as the cotton growers are concerned as the problem was so acute. Sir, I do not want to take credit for myself, But, then I said to you not to bring any delegation but to fax the message to me as to what was the problem and I would solve it within 24 hours. You sent the fax message and the next day we allowed about three lakh tonnes of cotton to be exported. It is not on party lines that we took any decision.

Why am I mentioning all this? Shri George Fernandes, you are here. Why has Karnataka been given a step-motherly treatment? I am unable to understand it because if the Congress Party has got 18 Members with them on this side, you do not require their support. But in the election you fight the battle. I will fight the battle with both you and the Congress. That is not an issue. I want to ask as to why Karnataka State is being allowed so less. Last year, about 30 lakh tonnes of foodgrains were given to Andhra Pradesh. How much was given to Karnataka and why? The figures are here. ...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU (Tenali): Sir, it is a question of utilisation of the thing. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: Please, your Chief Minister is capable enough. My Chief Minister is also equally worthy. I am not going to comment on this on political lines. I am not jealous. The farmers of Andhra Pradesh are dying and the farmers of Karnataka are also dying. At least the farmers who are committing suicide are competing with each other. Am I correct? Let us not have this type of partial attitude by the Government.

13.47 hrs.

(DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH *in the Chair)*

You have the *Annapoorna Antyodaya Yojana*. Did you release at least one kilogram of rice or foodgrain to Karnataka under this scheme? Can I make it as a political decision and if not why? Under this scheme not a single grain is released to Karnataka. There is this 'Food for Work' scheme which has now been converted to *Swarna Jayanti Rojgar Yojana*. The earlier programmes were converted into different names. It is all right; you take credit. It is not a new programme. I have not grouse about using a new classification at least by altering the name. I am not bothered on that. How much have you released to Karnataka under this scheme? Here it is said that Government of India gives 75 per cent of it free to the States. At the same time, they have fixed certain conditions and guidelines. They said 25 per cent is to be given as wages and 75 per cent as foodgrains and this

[Shri H.D. Deve Gowda]

75 per cent is to be given on the BPL rate. Am I correct? If I am wrong, please do correct me.

You said 75 per cent of the foodgrains are to be given to the workers who are engaged for this relief work; but that 75 per cent food component should be charged at BPL rate and the other 25 per cent as cash payment.

Sixty million tonnes of foodgrains are rotting. I read in a newspaper that foodgrains worth more than Rs. 800 crore were destroyed because they were not fit for human consumption. We are unable to store foodgrain in a proper way. The Food Corporation of India has so much of stock, but we are unable to preserve it and foodgrains worth Rs. 850 crore were destroyed. The Government is not prepared to give at least 50 per cent free. Why? How much subsidy are they giving to the exporters to clear the stock? On one side, people are dying in Orissa which the report I read in the newspaper said. In the beginning, I have said that I do not want to mix politics. When the people are starving and ultimately dying, what for have they got the stocks? When we introduced the PDS, our calculation was that about 23 million tonnes of foodgrains were necessary to meet the requirement. They have got 60 million tonnes to export, and to export it, they are giving so much of subsidy to exporters. Why not they consider giving it free when the people are suffering?

My friend from Haryana who initiated the discussion said that about 380 *talukas* or something like that are suffering and that yesterday, the Agriculture Minister has tried to get full information from the concerned States. Why do they not allow 50 per cent free? Why Should we not give it to those workers who are going to toil for their survival? These are some of the issues which I am unable to understand. They allow the foodgrains to rot and ultimately destroy them because they are not fit for human consumption. They cannot think in terms of people who are suffering today.

Yesterday, in the Rajya Sabha, there was some question about corporate houses. I am not going to deal with it. It is not the time for me to deal with it. I have gone through a number of items and under various sectors, the total amount of NPA is Rs. 88,000 crore. These sectors were classified as small-scale industrial sector, the monopoly houses, corporate sector and so on. So far as agriculture sector is concerned, hardly Rs. 7,800 crore are there as NPA. The country is going to think in terms of those suffering masses. There are 65 crore agriculturists and more than 80 per cent are small-holders. After land reforms were implemented with all seriousness in some States, only one or two States may be still lagging behind. I do not want to name those States. Several States like Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh have introduced land reforms so vigorously. There are several such States. Now, the holding is of half hectare, one hectare, one and a half hectare, two hectares and so on, barring a few big farms around Delhi and Bangalore where people own farms measuring 100 acres to 800 acres. They are fruit farms. That is a different issue. I do not want to deal with this subject now.

Out of the total NPA of Rs. 880,000 crore, about Rs. 7,800 crore is the amount due from the farmers. Can the Government not give one time concession to them? Can the House, which is going to vote for Rs. 4,50,000 crore Budget annually, not give one time concession to the farmers? It may be given in terms of converting short-term loan into medium-term loan and medium term loan into long-term loan. We are not prepared even to waive off at least the interest component of it. This is the type of a raw deal. Curing the days of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Shri S.K. Dey first started some of these programmes. In the last 53 years, we have drawn up several programmes in this country. With agony, late Shri Rajiv Gandhi said that only 16 *paise* reach the beneficiary. He said this knowing full well about the leakages that are there at various levels.

My appeal to the hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Finance Minister is, without mixing politics, to give a one-time concession to the farmers. How much is the interest component? It may be Rs. 1,000 crore or Rs. 2,000 crore. Fourteen States are suffering, and some of them are suffering due to heavy floods. People are living under the trees like birds. I have seen it all with my own eyes in your home State. Can we not think on these lines? Let us forget about politics and not think in terms of who gets the credit. I am not bothered whether Shri Vijpayee gets the credit for this.

I want a major policy decision in respect of the farming sector. There are two ways to it. One is a long-term policy, and the other is to provide immediate relief measures. What are the relief measures that are being provided? The Britishers have fixed something and we are following the same thing. When Shri Balram Jakhar was there, I fought the battle here and there was a marginal increase. Please apply your mind to this.

I know that the Prime Minister has got a number of advisors, but I do not think that there is any farmer to

advise the Prime Minister. I have seen in the past 50 years of my public life that people who can speak eloquently in English or Hindi matter the most, but that would not be of any help here. People are struggling in the villages.

Sir, I come from a village with a population of 150. Today, the population figure has gone up to 1,200, but the conditions remain the same, barring one high school, one middle-level school and electricity. If you take electricity, there will be no power for three months or four months in a year. In the power sector, my friend, Shri Prabhu is here, has attempted to make certain major changes. He went to the extent of bailing out the State Electricity Boards. But the question is this. Have we been able to move forward an inch? Delhi is suffering because of power shortage. Today, the situation is very bad in the country, especially in the farming sector. Some of the people have got their own power generating units, but what about the villagers? On this particular issue, I can deal with for hours together.

I demand that the States should not be discriminated, so far as funding under various heads is concerned. Secondly, I demand a one-time concession to the farmers. It has been indicated yesterday in the Rajya Sabha that there are about Rs. 8,000 crore non-performing assets relating to the farming sector, and my demand is that it should be waived. If you are not prepared to do that, at least, the interest component should be waived and the recovery of loans should be deferred.

Under the *Annapoorna Yojana*, you are giving foodgrains to the poor people. However, if a person is getting old-age pension, he is not given these foodgrains. If a woman is getting widow pension, she is not getting these foodgrains. What is all this? A person who is getting Rs. 75 or Rs. 100 per month as pension should avail of the benefit of *Annapoorna Yojana* or whatever *Yojana* it is, instead of allowing the foodgrains to rot. Can you think on those lines?

14.00 hrs.

Sir, unless this whole House pledges to implement the scheme, that had been initiated by the late Indira Gandhi, of connecting all the major rivers of the country- a scheme formulated by Shri K.L. Rao and updated by our Government—things would not improve. If this scheme of connecting the major rivers of the country is implemented, then most of the problems would be solved. The hon. Prime Minister should evolve a policy for implementation of this scheme by taking all the States into confidence.

Sir, with these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI SUBODH ROY (Bhagalpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, due to acute drought condition, many states of the Country are facing severe crisis and 20 crore farmers and labourers are passing their days in distress and are crying for help.

Sir, as per the available report, our Agriculture Minister had convened a meeting with Agriculture Minister of 11 States and after reviewing the condition said that 320 districts had been affected by drought. But the condition is worse than this. In the Southern States like Kerala which have been receiving adequate rains, reports say that water level in big dams have gone down which has affected the generation of hydro power, which in turn is adversely affecting the industries there. States of North India like Punjab., Haryana, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Praesh too have been affected badly, but it has not happened suddenly. It is true that we have been discussing the issue of flood every year and have warned the Central Government about he fact that the Caution, Vigilance and sensitiveness needed to tackle the situation are being continuously ignored due to which problem arises when it comes to extending relief to people in time and the whole system fails when it comes to help out the farmers and other persons in distress. It is a fact that extensive discussion was held last year regarding the drought in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa but no seriousness was shown in this regard. Today, the situation is that the 60 percent population of our country which contributes more than 26 percent of the gross domestic product in the form of foodgrains and other things is reeling under problem. As has been said by Shri Mani Shankarji, Chauhanji or Shri Chautalaji it does not seem that the Government is working with seriousness in this regard.

Sir, the decision which should have been taken after yesterday's cabinet meeting and which was necessary too, has not been taken and it seems that serious thoughts have not been given to it. The point is that the whole area of the country affected by drought should be declared as drought hit and loan alongwith the loans of big moneylenders loan and electricity bills of the poor and middle class farmers of that area should be waived off.

Sir, you know that though the Agriculture Minister announces waiving off the loans but the same is not

[Shri Subodh Roy]

implemented because the bank officials refuse to respect his announcement. They accept the orders of the Finance Ministry and the instructions of Reserve Bank of India. Unless a circular in this regard is issued by them they would not waive off the loans of the farmers. Therefore, when discussion is going on such a serious, sensitive issue like national calamity, the Finance Minister should have been present here. Who else would waive the loans of farmers in the absence of Finance Minister and in what manner?

Sir, we are saying that no steps are being taken to recover the loans of banks worth Rs. 83 thousand crores which remains outstanding against the big industrialists of the country, strict action are taken by the Banks to recover loans against farmers but no such action is taken against the big industrialists. Why the Government of India feels reluctant to recover the outstanding dues of the Banks against them? That is why it has failed to recover even 50 percent of its 83 thousand crores of rupees.

Sir, today, the Government is not in a position to extend relief and money to farmers, labourers, poor people to come out of this precarious situation but I think if the Government recovers the outstanding loans against the industrialists, it would face no problem in extending help to the poor. I, therefore, demand that strict action should be taken by the Central Government in order to recover outstanding dues against big industrialists of the country.

Sir, in this moment of national calamity, there is a great necessity of implementing 'Food for work' programme, but as the hon. Member was saying right now, the Government of India have a stock of 6 crore tonnes of foodgrains ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am on a point of order. Hon. Member has been speaking about an important subject and serious and extensive discussion is going on but not a single member from the Congress Party is present here. It indicates that hon. Members of the Congress Party are not concerned about drought. It does not give a good picture as no member of the Congress Party is present in the House while such an important discussion is going on. We, the Ministers are present here through our leader is not present, if anyone among us remains absent, the opposition stalls are proceedings saying the Minister is absent. They are not present here and in that sense they do not have any moral right to speak about drought.

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): Sir, she has won the day by pointing out that the main opposition party is not present in the House. I thank her for discharging her duty.

[Translation]

SHRI SUBODH ROY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was saying that as per the Cabinet meeting held on yesterday, Rs. 3 thousand crore are needed to help out the drought hit States. But his problem is not going to be solved unless the Finance Ministry, Government of India implements an intensive programme on priority basis and wins over the people of drought hit areas that they would not die out of hunger or their problems would become manifold due to some diseases on some other reason and this programme would be adopted for the persons living in the drought hit areas considering drought as the number one problem.

You would remember that non-Congress governments were formed in nine States in 1967. In 1967, Bihar was worst hit by the drought and famine but the then government tackled the situation with such a commitment that it did not let a single person die by opening fair price shops on the streets and lanes. All dams that were damaged were repaired, ponds were digged further deep and landless labourers were engaged in repairing roads through 'Food for Work' programme. Not a single labour or landless farmer had to move out of Bihar to earn his livelihood. Today there is need of the same determination and commitment.

Many of our friends present here were holding ministerial posts in that Government. I am only trying to remind you that it should be above party or politics. For this, the Government needs to take firm steps in this regard. A crisis management committee was constituted there. Indian Council of Agricultural Research had also warned and provided certain guidelines about the drought management. Besides, America based "National oceanic and atmosphere administration" had also warned and alerted the Government of India about this fesicious drought situation.'

You are aware that even in a country like America, the Government makes an allocation of Rs. 800 crore per year to combat drought situation. They make arrangements to combat such situation before hand but in our country the Government awakens only when the

drought situation has deteriorated and the Government is caught unawares when the natural clamities like this strike. This tendency should be done away with. Alternative crop should be sown and such an arrangement should be made so as to provide relief to the farmers and the poor people of the drought affected areas. We know that not only the farmers but lakhs of weavers, farm labourers and craftsmen engaged in various crafts are also a harried lot. There is a power shortage in the country today. The Ministry of Power and N.T.P.C. should ensure that those drought affected areas get adequate electricity supply on priority basis.

I hail from Bhagalpur where the paddy crop has been planted in only 20 percent area while it used to be planted in more than 60 percent area by this time of the year during a normal monsoon. Hence, through you I would like to say that the Ministry of Agriculture should formulate a programme in co-ordination with the Ministry of Water Resources and the Ministry of Power. Only a single Ministry should not be held responsible to combat the drought situation. It is the responsibility of the Government of India and all the political parties of India. All of us should try to provide maximum assistance to the people and the farmers by winning their confidence and also by working in co-ordination with each other. It is the need of the hour today. Hence, we should not resort to such political overtones and should not take such step which could disturb the harmony and create friction amongst the people. I would like to particularly know from the members of the ruling party and BJP as to what according to them are the priorities before the country? The priorities before the country today are to help the farmers and combat drought. In such a situation you should try to lead the nation unitedly with all seriousness and without indulging in any fissiparous tendency. I would like to apprise the House the latest situation in this regard. The owners of the sugar mills were asked to pay the outstanding dues to the tune of Rs. 1000 crore pending against them to the farmers but nothing happened despite appealing to them for several years now. This has resulted in worsening the condition of the farmers. The Government of India should ensure that the farmers get their outstanding dues by taking stringent steps in this regard. Today a grave situation has arisen. We want that their outstanding dues should be paid to them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, it is the turn of Shri Ummareddy but as Mulayam Singhji is to leave the House early. Hence, he should be called first.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: I would not interrupt Mulayam Singhji during his speech but I would like to know whether you would call those Members who have given Notice as per the rule. ...*(Interruptions)* I have cancelled my visit despite a problem. Hence, I appeal that all those Members who have given Notice Under Rule 193 should be called.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The time for each party is fixed and the names have been given on behalf of the party.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: Parties do indulge in partiality and injustice but you may do the justice.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (Sambhal): He was a socialist but has switched over to the BJP. He is right in saying that all the parties have become less democratic except Samajwadi Party. ...*(Interruptions)*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is deplorable that during the monsoon session of the Parliament when the discussion always used to take place on the situation of flood and rains, for the first time the discussion is being held on the drought situation. Almost the entire country is in the grip of a severe drought and the drought is so severe that the Government cannot shun from its responsibility by labelling it as a natural calamity. The Constitution maker had visualised the setting up of a welfare state in which the Government was expected to provide all the basic facilities to the people and retrieve them from the calamities like drought, flood, earthquake, cyclone or super cyclone which struck Orissa. A welfare state fulfils all such obligations. Today the entire country is in the grip of a severe drought. Let alone irrigation, water is not available even for drinking and washing clothes in several parts of the country. Hon. Shivraj Singh has raised many good issues and he has been able to do so because he is still associated with the village and had it been the case with the Agriculture Minister also he would not have made such statements.

I am not in favour of setting up Commissions and Committees which serve as excuses for not performing and fulfilling the Government's responsibility in combating drought. The Committee and Commissions submit their reports in two to three years. Facilities should be provided immediately. I have seen that Commissions and Committees keep on asking for extending their time so that all the facilities like accommodation, power, allowances and salaries continue to be availed. That is why, I said that if the Government do not want to perform then it constitutes a committee and commission.

Today the country is faced with the problem of starvation and even if there is satisfactory rainfall, crop

[Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav]

remains completely devastated. Today it is hard to compensate the loss suffered on account of the failure of the monsoon and the whole of the country is facing the same situation as I have told here. In Rajasthan people have let loose their cattle because those are dying for want of water. Crops are totally devastated and there is no fodder to feed the cattle and the farmers do not want to see their cattle dying in front of their eyes. There is no drinking water. Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra are suffering from the same situation which I have mentioned. In Aurangabad and Marathwara people quarrels with one another over drinking waters. We have read in newspapers that in the capital of Madhya Pradesh the drinking water and the water for purpose of taking bathing is supplied once in every two days and even it is not supplied on time. The Chief Minister of both the States i.e. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shri Digivijay Singh ji and Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Vilasrao Desmukh had visited the Pandharpur temple to worship God and pray for the rains. Both the Chief Ministers agreed that they would not be able to combat drought. Nothing can be more disappointing than this. I would appeal to my Congress colleagues to tell the Chief Ministers of their party not to shirk their responsibility of providing facilities to the people by leaving everything to almighty. We have also faced this problem of floods and drought when we were in the Government. The Chief Ministers whether they are from Congress or from BJP are trying to divert the attention of the people from the central issue.

The situation is even worse in Bihar. Approximately 35 districts are drought affected and 22 districts are inundated in flood waters coming from Nepal. This Government has the maximum Ministers from Bihar and they also hail from that particular origin. The flood due to the rivers flowing from Nepal is perennial phenomenon of this area and Bihar comes in the grip of flood's every year but no permanent solution is found to this problem due to which the farmers and the workers are facing devastation.

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): The water from that area also flows down to Poorvanchal.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: You are right. Floods have hit Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh. We have got the information that eight villages are completely in the grip of floods there. 90 percent of crop in Uttar Pradesh has been devastated due to drought and floods. You might have said today's newspaper. The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh has clearly stated that she had met the Prime Minister and those districts have been declared as drought affected. The hon. Prime Minister told her to work as per the rules.

SHRI RASHID ALVI (Amroha): The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh did not say so.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: I have not yet finished my speech. You may clarify your position when your turn comes. Only a blind person can say like that. You can read about it in newspaper. The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh told while addressing the Press Conference that she had declared the districts as drought affected as directed by the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister has asked her to work as per the rules and that she has been working as per the rules.

Rajnath Singh ji has been appointed national General Secretary of BJP, Shri Vinay Katiyar has been appointed party President of UP Unit of BJP, but they are not able to get anything done. If you talk to follow the rules then the district which has suffered losses more than 50 percent will be declared drought hit. This is the situation prevailing in UP. The CM of UP is very insensitive. We can not except any relief to be provided to people from such Governments. If Prime Minister, who represents this State, says that so many districts have been declared drought hit, then we shall talk to him, nothing could be more shocking than it in our country. You might be knowing that the same situation is prevailing in Bihar and in many districts in UP, such as Aligarh, Deoria, Ghazipur, Bundelkhand, women are ploughing the land in the night by putting off their clothes so that the rain god Indra may be pleased and rain pours down. Not only that on the burning land boys are lying on the land and burning their body so that God Indira is made pleased and rain down pours. What can be more shameful and sad than it. What can be said, hon., Agriculture Minister, whether you are aware of that. I do not want to repeat, Shri Janeshwar Mishra of our party has already said in the Rajya Sabha that when such a drought situation arose, Raja Janak had himself ploughed the land. At that time women were not required to plough naked and children were not required to lie on the hot land. It reflects the seriousness of the Government. A few days back we read two statements of Agriculture Minister.

SHRI SAIDUZZAMA (Muzaffarnagar): Ask them to plough.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: I shall not say so. Prime Minister is very elderly, I can not say him to do so. Hon. Chairman, Sir, few days back I read two

statements of Hon. Minister of Agriculture on drought. One statement is that, have faith in God, pray to please God Indra so that God Indra is pleased and rain down pours. This is first statement of Minister of Agriculture and second statement was that farmers do not worry. Government godowns in our country are full with grains. There is no shortage of grains. Whether Minister of Agriculture is aware that situation have come in the country when Khattis and godowns were full of grains, though people kept dying due to starvation? Whether such situations have not come in the country? Whether Minister of agriculture is aware that 40 percent of the stored grains are not edible even for animals and no State is prepared to purchase wheat from FCI? Should such an insensitive and casual statement given by the Government? Sharad Yadav ji, I and you know very well that Choudhary Saheb has stated several times that I am son of a farmer, not a farmer myself. I am a lawyer. Then I am Minister and my son is a son of lawyer, is a son of a Minister, but not a son of farmer. If power goes to the hand of such people then remember, what was happening during the Congress rule. The same will be done by my son. Remember it. It has been stated before us. It has been said before the people of Samajwadi Party, it has been said before the people openly in a general meeting. I am proud that even now I get the farming done. When I find time to visit native village, I go to farm. I also suggest that in which farm what should be sown. I know what agriculture is and how to do farming? The condition of agricultural labourer and farmers are very miserable and they say that godowns in our country are full of grains. If godowns are full of grains, then I would like to ask Minister of Agriculture the reason of the poverty of farmers? Why the farmers are starving? Why the farmers are reeling under heavy loan? Your godown are full of grains then why their economic condition is not improving? Because they do not get cost of crops at proper time. Why the farmers are not getting payment for sugarcane, potatoes and wheat? At some places no payment has been made to any farmer. Just to say that Government has no money, remember it Hon. Chairman, Sir, I would like to say through you that people and facilities to be provided to the people can not be neglected on the pretext of lack of resources. It is the duty of the Government to generate resources and ensure all round development of the people and the Government which can not do this, can not generate resources, is inefficient and irresponsible. I have been in Government and it is therefore I am saying so. Today, the Government says that recovery will be made in the next year. If recovery will be made next year then what is the benefit of it because all the recovery will be made at one time. Interest will rise. I would like to say that this is not drought hit country, our demand is that it should be declared famine affected country. Kharif crop is already destroyed. You have already accepted it. We know that crop has been destroyed. Loans can be waived and it has been done earlier also. When Sharad Yadav was Minister in the Union Government, he had promised that Central Government shall share fifty percent. When I was Chief Minister of UP I had waived loan worth Rupees 1400 crore, I had waived loan of rupees 10000 per farmer but Central Government has not given a single rupee till date though they had promised to pay half of the total amount. Economic condition of UP Government was not satisfactory at that time. You have a Planning Commission. You can ask to him? They had said that the best performance in the economic front was 1989-90 which continued till 1997. When I was Chief Minister in 1993-94 of UP again then at that time we had approached the Planning Commission and they accorded approval to the amount we demanded. At that time Shri Pranav Mukherjee was Vice Chairman of Planning Commission. This is the report of Reserve Bank. Your assertion is that there is shortage of resources, on this pretext to neglect people and not to help them and not to pay attention towards them is nothing but to shirk responsibility. It is your responsibility to generate resources. We will cooperate with you in it. You should encourage all for it. Voluntary organisations will help you in it. We are ready to give one-two days salary on this account. To save the starving people we are prepared to give one or two days salary and all should give that. If this proposal is passed here then we are prepared to give it. This is a period of trouble. We are prepared to extend government our cooperation and are in favour of extending all types of facilities to the people.

Today what is the condition of country? There is situation of starvation in the whole country. Small farmers stores food grains for only two-three months. Small farmer knows that in the month of Bhadarpad maize and Bajra crop will be harvested and with this hope borrows for marriage and clothing purposes, but today he is not in a position to repay it. Labourer keep food grains for a month or two. Today he is on the verge of starvation. The situation of starvation is prevailing every where. It is therefore, in my opinion country should be declared famine hit. We do not declare drought hit on the pretext that only 20 percent or less than 50 percent crop has been destroyed, but crops in most of the villages have been destroyed. Whether farmer should pray for the destruction of more than fifty percent crops so that relief will be extended by declaring the area as drought hit. Is it

[Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav]

practical? Should one pray that all the areas be affected with famine and whole village should suffer destruction only then relief will be given., All information village-wise and areas wise are there: Chairman of Zila Parishad will give all informations in this regard. Village Pradhan will give you facts. What the Lekhpals and Tehsildars are doing and how many people are starving in a block. You will get all the information, SHO knows about the dacoits, murderers and anti social elements. They know everything. Hon Minister of Agriculture, you are shirking from your responsibility. We quarrrel with each other and allege each other, we call all of us dishonest, but bureaucrats are enjoying. Are we all dishonest? In view of a few institutions they are honest. In your country CBI is honest, bureaucrats are honest but all politicians are dishonest. Now the bill which is likely to be introduced in view of that we shall fight election on the mercy of anti social elements and criminals. They will level charges of rape and will get reports lodged. You are going to enact such a law.

It will increase the number of criminals and they will come into politics. It should be reviewed as to how many members with criminal background are there in the present Lok Sabha. May be a few criminals are there in the present Lok Sabha. It is not proper to say that all the present Members or Parliament are criminals. I am proud that no criminal was provided assembly tickets in the last Uttar Pradesh Assembly Elections by our party. It might have resulted in the loosing of 2-4 seats but no such person was provided ticket to contest the election. Gill Sahib is not present here but he has all praise for Mulayam Singh for following the guidelines of the Election Commission by not providing tickets to any criminal to contest the election. I was sure if the assembly ticket was provided to a person to control assembly election for an adjoining assembly constituency near Delhi, he was sure to win but he was not given party ticket. I would not like to reiterate as to what type of persons we have to deal with. We don't know how they provide ticket to such persons to contest election against us. If they have fielded some gullible man against us then it will be a matter of pride for us. Doesn't B.J.P. has find any such person to field against us. Somnath Babu, whether you are also involved with them. We are to agitate.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Why are you involving us?

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: It is to reform you, you should be reformed. Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are indulging ourselves in useless things. According to same institutions we are dishonest and offenders. The Government is created such type of situations against our political party thus we are being defamed in public. Please consider this practically. No criminal can enter Lok Sabha. The People will not elect criminal. I am finally of the view that no criminal can be elected after defeating me.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is grave crisis due to flood and drought. The water level is going down. I would like to say 2 things about Uttar Pradesh. In Lucknow the constituency of Prime Minister in our local area Etawah, the water level gone down by 20-21 %. both the districts have not been declared as drought affected districts whereas the parliamentary constituency of Shri Ajit Singh has been declared drought affected. Whether his duty was ended with this work. I would like to say that not only those districts but the entire nation should be declared as drought affected.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: The Government itself is drought affected.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: The Government is conspirator from within. Mr. Chairman, Sir, our hon'ble Prime Minister had convened an all party meeting two years ago to discuss serious water crisis in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan. In that meeting all the leaders have unanimously suggested to implement 'Food for Work' scheme in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra and the second suggestion, was this that digging of Ponds can be done under this scheme. When I was Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, at that time, also we have formulated such a scheme. I would like to know from the Government that what action has been taken on this after taking decision two years back. The Government can not reply as to what is the fate of these schemes. What are the difficulties and shortcomings. Shri Ajit Singh ji you can enquire from the Prime Minister that what was the reasons for not accepting those suggestions. Inspite of the water level going down by 20-21%, Lucknow and Etawah have not been declared as drought affected districts. But you have declared your constituency Baghpat as drought affected. Will you ask the Prime Minister, which districts will come under this list. The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh has said the district which were suggested by the Prime Minister, we have declared them drought affected. 90% of crops of entire Uttar Pradesh have been destroyed. The Agriculture Minister has himself accepted 65% districts. Which figure is correct and which is incorrect, I don't know. But I have read his statement in the newspaper that 65 districts are under the grip of severe drought ...*(Interruptions)* You can ask the Prime Minister.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Now he has to ask the Deputy Prime Minister.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: A statement by the Prime Minister has been published in the newspaper is that there are many imitators in this country. Please do not mind. Pandit Nehru has said you should do cultivation on roof top of your house by putting mud there. Hon'ble Prime Minister says that you should store water on roof tops. Rain water is collected over the rooftop. ...*(Interruptions)* The Minister says to collect water. Matter is serious. You will store water. If you allow me to speak I will speak. I will not speak more, but I was having a lot of submissions.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Central Government have implemented crop Insurance scheme at national level in the country you have spoken correctly but this is only a show business. It is implemented in all the States. But there is no money to pay the premium of Insurance with Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, U.P. and Bihar. Whichever States have been mentioned by me and which are in my knowledge, but they do not have money. You know all these things. The same condition is of Bihar. Mr. Agriculture Minister if you know then you should refrain this when you reply. We are not saying about water crises. It is told by Shri Kofi Annan the General Secretary of U.N. that the next war could be fought for water. This anticipation is becoming strong. Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra are affected by serious drought. There is serious crises of drinking water in Aurangabad, Marathwada. Everyday there is same dispute about water such as Kaveri water, there is dispute for Narmada water between Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. We are affected by the dispute for Yamuna water. Delhi, Haryana, U.P. and Himachal Pradesh are fighting over the sharing of Yamuna water, Chief Ministers of these States used to fight, for that. Then Shri Vidya Charan Shukla was organising panchayat over Yamuna water. Today these disputes are occuring once again. Whatever the General Secretary of U.N. had said, and his hopes are being strongly felt. Today we are facing this situation. There is the dearth of water management.

I would like to say that among the five rivers flowing from the Himalayas river Indus is the main river and distribution of water of river, Indus was based on an agreement which was signed in 1953 with Pakistan. That was against the interests of India. I demand that the Government of India should reconsider it. Mr. Agriculture Minister you should after discussing the matter with the Prime Minister reconsider it and have full share after the dialogue with Pakistan delete the portions from the agreement which are adversely affecting India's water of river Indus which should be flown into India so that Punjab, Haryana, Himachal and Kashmir may not have the crisis of water and power, Pakistan is using that water against our interests. You have signed erroneous agreement. We had opposed at that time also and even today we are saying that we should have dialogue and reconsider that agreement. By this the problem of power and water of these four States can be solved.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Jal Purush, Rajendra Singh who has worked for converting the dry land of Rajasthan into greenland, the Government should take lesson from this and make an effort on experimental basis. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): I have intervened that in my districts Bulandshahar and Gautam Budhnagar are also drought hit areas.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: But when Shri Rajendra Singh was delivering a speech in a Seminar in Aligarh he was insulted by the Chairman of District Panchayat. He was imprisoned under NSA. The statement of Minister of Agriculture that what loss was occurred what anti national act happened by mere slapping. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): An agreement is being signed between Pakistan and India, where NSA is being imposed. You please talk about drought. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: I am speaking on drought only. Rajendra Singh worked to counter drought and they are saying 'what is wrong in assaulting him'.

SHRI AJIT SINGH: We did not do so.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: Will the water crisis will be solved through casteism?

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Mulayam Singh Yadav ji, please do not make baseless allegations.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: I stand by what I have said. Please do not threaten me, hon. Minister? Are you flaunting your ministership?

SHRI AJIT SINGH: You are threatening.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: I am not threatening. I am putting forth my views. I just said that being the Minister of Agriculture you ought not to give such statements. If you were quiet, we would not have forced the issue. I would not even have quoted your

[Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav]

statement. Look in the newspapers what you have said in your statement. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI AJIT SINGH: You look at the list of criminals in your party, I do not need to look at my statement. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: Power has gone to your head. If they get angry they can cause damage but I can do nothing if I get angry. This is the only difference. Since you are in power, you can do anything. That is why I say how that assault has endangered national security. A bijali jal-purush such as Rajendra Singh. ...*(Interruptions)* Jal Purush is sufficient for him. You should have been cautious.

Sir, low rainfall and imbalance in water environment are responsible for such a situation. Trees are being felled indiscriminately and the Government have formulated a number of schemes for plantation. After plantation, Union Government provides huge funds to the States for social forestry but plantation was not undertaken and entire money was wasted. If that money had been well utilized, India would have been a green country and this crisis could have been averted. Hon. Minister of Agriculture should look into it and reply accordingly. At present he is too angry to reply. My demand is that recoveries from farmers should be stopped. Interests due to them should be waived, even if in instalments. Loans should be waived. When I was the Chief Minister of U.P., I had waived farmer's loans. When I again become the Chief Minister of U.P. in 1993, the then Congress Government of the centre had announced Rs. 24 crore for weavers. I provided that amount of Rs. 24 crore from the funds of U.P. Government to weavers but as of now, the Union Government have not made available that amount nor any interest has been paid to that amount. But it did not obstruct either the economic development or the people's development. Development went on and I am pleased that during my Chief Ministership, the financial condition of Uttar Pradesh was very strong. It is not very difficult. Hon. Minister of Agriculture, why don't you waive off the loans of poor farmers? My submission is that all the crisis prone States should be declared famine affected and recoveries of loans should be stopped, rather the loans themselves should be waived. If not in whole, at least half of the loan should be waived off. At least, the interest should be waived. When I was the Cooperative Minister of Uttar Pradesh in 1977-78, we had passed a legislation that in cooperative sector, the interest would not be allowed to go to the double the amount of principal irrespective of the period of the loan. It was done in 1977-78 and then Chaudhary Charan Singh had appreciated it and now when I am speaking in support of farmers, his son gets angry. It is tough. I have said on a number of occasions that we avoid getting angry because the Minister of Agriculture is the son of our leader. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI AJIT SINGH: You have said it earlier also. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: We had not done anything. You may abuse me as much as you please, but you will continue to ride piggyback to BJP. If you were not so, you might have attained higher positions. If might have happened but you followed Congress policy to become another Rajiv Gandhi. That was the problem ...*(Interruptions)* They contested elections against me and now are riding piggyback to BJP and became Agriculture Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Please do not speak on your personal drought, speak on drought prevailing in the country.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: Please tell me when you want to speak. You can only speak. We do not expect you to do anything. You know nothing about handpumps and canals.

Therefore, I would like to submit that as immediate measures, country should be declared under famine, the loans of farmers should be waived and the school fees for their children should be waived. There is no water in canals, drains, dams or tanks. All this point clearly to the severity of drought.

Sir, please immediately make the payment to farmers for potato and sugarcane. The Government should pay compensation for loans given to the farmers by the banks and interest may also be waived off. Please do not give the excuse that the Reserve Bank of India is not giving approval so what can the Government do. The Government should also make arrangements for fodder and medicines for animals in addition to making arrangements of medicines for farmers. A meeting should be held with the hon. Minister of Railways to chalk out a programme to carry water tankers immediately through trains. The Government states that godowns are overflowing with foodgrains. But I would like to submit that 40 percent of the foodgrains is rotten and the State Governments are not ready to lift the foodgrains. What to talk of human beings, even animals reject the foodgrains.

SHRI SHARAD YADAV: Mr. Chairman, Sir, facts as told by the hon. Member my be partially correct. I agree that there may be certain complaints about the supplies made by the FCI, but it cannot be generalized. Through you, I would like to state that if complaints regarding rotten foodgrains are received these are immediately redressed, but at most of the places foodgrains supplied are of good quality. So, the hon. Member cannot generalize. All the complaints in this regard would be definitely redressed.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: I would request the hon. Minister to visit the godowns and check whether 40 percent of the wheat is rotten or not. The hon. Minister must visit Fatehabad, Prathapgarh, and Allahabad etc. to see the quality himself.

Although, Shri Rajiv Gandhi spoke in English and perhaps people could not understand it, but he stated that merely 16 pasia out of one rupee reaches the common people and 84 paisa get swindled in between. I, therefore, request you to not to be fussy about the reply given in the House, but to visit the godowns to see as to what is the reality. I would withdraw my words if I am wrong.

I would like to submit that India has made great strides in the field of space technology. But despite this we have lagged behind in Meteorology. All predictions of the Meteorological Department are proving wrong, but the scientists of the Department of Meteorology are not to be blamed. The fact is that they are not being provided with all the advanced instruments and machines and other facilities, but still are being blamed. Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Delhi, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Orissa may be declared drought-affected areas.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Department of Water Resources, Department of Agriculture and Department of Power-all these three departments, deal with drought and unless these three departments are given powers and resources etc., nothing could be done because at the moment none of these three departments has any powers or resources. For everything the approval of the Ministry of Finance is a must. Making speech is easy but rhetoric can't provide succour to the poor farmers and the country cannot tackle drought. The lot of the poor farmers cannot be ameliorated till all these three Departments are given adequate powers and resources.

With these words, I conclude and extend my thanks to you for having given me the time to speak.

15.00 hrs.

[English]

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU (Tenali): Thank you, Mr. Chairman Sir, for having given me the opportunity to speak on this very important issue being debated in the House not once in a year but on two or three occasions. Almost every year it has become more or less a custom and ritual that is being performed at the misery of the nation and at the sufferings of the poor farmers.

These sad seasonal conditions, which have been prevailing across the country in several States and also leading to drought and flood situations, have been making the people miserable taking the lives of several people and also cattle, damaging the property, rendering several people homeless and reducing the people without having any employment opportunities. There are several cascading effects, not only on the agricultural side, not only on the employment generation side, including fodder, including drinking water and also on several issues.

It is with great concern and anguish that I speak on behalf of my party TDP to project some of the views as to whether we have been really concerned about this particular grave issue. I do not say that no effort has been put up by any Government; successive Governments have been trying to do their best. It is the concern of everybody. But still whether the steps that are being taken by Government are adequate or not, whether the Governments have been pulling out their strength in further augmenting the steps; and whether these are the long-term measures or short-term measures, is the real question.

For fourteen consecutive years, it has been said that there was a normal rainfall, though in several parts of the country there were several aberrations. The damage due to flood was there, the damage due to drought was there in several districts but by and large for about 14 years we had normal rainfall in this country. Meteorologists and Climatologists have predicted that the fifteenth year also will be a normal year and they have given the information to this nation and the people thought that normal rainfall will be there during this year i.e the fifteenth year.

Now, what has happened? Quite contrary to the expectations and predictions, there is an unprecedented and unusual drought situation that is prevailing in the country. What had happened to the predictions in the meteorological stations? Are we to blame the scientists who have predicted this or are we to blame whether the country is inadequately equipped with the sophisticated machinery and equipment for doing these predictions? Now, it is a question of soul-searching proposition for the Government.

[Prof. Ummaeddy Venkateswarlu]

It is a heartrending problem for the people. So, we will have to make a thorough analysis. I can speak about how my State is suffering. I can also speak about how the people in different States are suffering due to drought. But a little amount of analysis into the past is required. It is only the experience out of the past century or two centuries which gives us the scope for future planning and future formulation of the policies.

Sir, it has been predicted that in 20 out of 36 meteorological sub-divisions, the rainfall recorded was deficient. Even among the remaining 16, in 10 meteorological sub-divisions, it has been recorded that rainfall is deficient when compared to the long-term average of the rainfall. It amounts that in 30 out of 36 meteorological sub-divisions, the rainfall was deficient.

Yesterday, the hon. Minister for Agriculture has taken stock of the situation and had a meeting of the Agriculture Ministers and Revenue Ministers of 14 States. He said that about 320 districts out of 524 districts are reeling under drought. It is the most unprecedented situation.

Sir, with everyday passes without rain, 10 more districts will be added to the drought situation. It looks as if that there will be no rain in the near future. Even semblance of raining is not there. If this type of dry spell continues for another 10 to 15 days, more than 90 percent of the districts in the country will be drought stricken and the situation will be very alarming. So, drought is prevailing in 14 States in the country and several States are suffering with shortfall in rainfall. I have just collected some data. The deficiency is not to a small extent. West and East Rajasthan are suffering a lot now. The deficiency is—63 per cent as on today. In Western UP it is—68 per cent. In Haryana and Delhi, it is—63 per cent. In Chhattisgarh it is—60 per cent. In Orissa, it is—30 per cent. In Andhra, it is-39 per cent. In Pondicherry it is-34 per cent. In Karnataka it is between-24 and-42 per cent. In Kerala, it is-32 per cent. So, this is the level of deficiency with regard to rainfall as on today when compared to same day of last year. This is the severity of the problem. As a result of which, almost several districts in each State are reeling under drought.

15.07 hrs.

(SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV *in the Chair)*

In Madhya Pradesh, 21 districts out of 45 districts are under drought. In Haryana, normally, paddy to the extent of 6.67 lakh hectares is transplanted every year by this time but now the transplantation has not even gone beyond four lakh hectares. In Chhattisgarh, drought is prevailing in 16 districts. In Karnataka about five districts, in Himachal Pradesh, six out of 12 districts are under drought. In Tamil Nadu, eight delta districts are under drought.

Rajasthan is heavily reeling under drought and it is the worst sufferer. In Andhra Pradesh, out of 23 districts, 144 districts are reeling under severe drought. So this is the gravity of the situation. That is how, the drought is prevailing in various States. So, at this point of time, I would only like the Government to consider one particular thing. No Government can be blamed for this drought situation. It is a natural calamity. But when you just consider the various problems, there is a need for a scientific analysis of the past. In the absence of this type of analysis, no future can be planned.

What are the causes for the growing calamities? Have we ever checked with the earlier position? So you just analyse the drought situations and the natural calamities in the past 200 years. In the 19th century, how many natural calamities have taken place? In the 20th century, what was the position? If you just look into the data, it is really a very surprising.

During the 19th century, that is, between 1801 and 1900, there were 20 natural calamities of severe nature. It amounts to one in five years. During the 20th century, this number has increased to 26. So as the century passes on, as the decade passes on, severe calamities have also been increasing. So, when it was one in five years during the 19th century, it is one in four years in the 20th century.

Take for instance the past 25 years, the quarter century from 1975 to 2000, there were nine disasters, calamities in this country. It works out that there is a calamity of one in three years. So if you just analyse the data, the natural calamities have been increasing. The frequency is increasing in this country. There must have been some substantial reason why this drought situation is increasing from time to time. There are several scientists who have warned the global network about the causes. Several observations are there.

I quote from *The Hindustan Times* of 18th May, 2002:

"None of the findings suggest—as some climatologists would have us believed—that the unseasonal rain and shine the planet has been experiencing lately has anything to do with normal fluctuations in the atmospheric systems. On the contrary, they turn out to be only a precursor to the kind of climate changes that can be expected from the global warming fuelled by the build up of CO2 and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The world was warmer in the first three months of this year than at any time in the past, 1000 years..."

When compared to the past 1,000 years, the warmth in the globe during the past three months was very high.

There must have been some substantial reason for that. That is why, besides going into the short-term measures that any Government would take, why should we not have a thorough scientific analysis as to what exactly are the reasons why droughts are increasing from time to time and why the temperature is increasing from time to time?

In my own State, this year, the highest temperature recorded was 51 degrees Celsius. Never in the past has the temperature gone up to 51 degree Celsius. Here is a warning that at this rate global temperatures would be increasing by as much as four degree Celsius by 2080. By 2080, in our country too, there would be an increase of four degree Celsius. So, in my State, if it were 51 degree Celsius this year, after some seventy to eighty years, if, it would increase by four degrees to 55 degree Celsius, no living creature would be able to survive. That is the gravity of the situation. It depends on how much carbon dioxide is released in the atmosphere.

The urgency of the situation is easier to gauge than the consequences, which would be much more than mere mega-storms and droughts. One shudders to recall how in 1994, a long monsoon in north India, followed by scorching temperatures drove all the rats into the cities. This caused an outbreak of pneumonic plague in Surat, killing scores and costing dearly to this country; 90 long days of dry spell costed so much. These are some of the issues here. So, why should we not have a thorough scientific analysis of the past and build plans for the future?

It has been warned that it is time for a planetary health check up, which would examine the impact of the changes in environment like loss of bio-diversity, indiscriminate use of fertilisers and pesticides, consistent pollution of water bodies, etc. and imbalance in ecological systems. All the major environmental concerns have got a contribution to the present state of affairs. That is where we would have to make a thorough analysis of these issues. Between 23rd of October and 1st of November this year, India is going to host a major international conference called. "The Conference of Parties to the United Nations' Framework Convention on Climatic Change". We are told that we are going to host an international conference on climatic changes and about 5,000 delegates are expected to attend this conference.

Before we host the conference, what is the thorough analysis that we are going to make? Being the host country, what is the type of scientific analysis that we are going to have to make a presentation in such a high level conference on climatological issues. If there were any analysis, we would be happy if this House could be taken into confidence. If they share with us the issues, we would be happy. We would get educated as to how this planet is behaving and as to how this country is going to suffer. We would be happy if the hon. Minister of Agriculture would get the information from the hon. Minister of Environment and Forests, who would be normally doing this job, and disseminate this information among all those concerned, whether it is the farming community of any other community.

As such, natural calamities play a very vital role. Instead of just discussing every year on this issue and just asking for some short-term measures, which are inevitable to mitigate the situation at that point of time, a long-term policy on this issue is much more useful and meaningful, particularly during this age of 21st century where globally we talk about the technological revolution. If we express our inability to predict and educate the masses it will be really disastrous.

I remember to have seen one item in the media recently that Governments cannot come to the rescue of these victims and it is only the God who can come to the rescue of these victims. If this type of helplessness is expressed by the Governments, we will be shattering the very confidence of the people, leave aside the succour that you are going to provide. The very confidence is now being shattered when we say that the Governments cannot come to the rescue of the people, but it is only God who can come to the rescue of the people.

Somehow, very alarming situations are prevailing. I will come to the recommendations of the Eleventh Finance Commission. I am not going into the details of the Ninth Finance Commission and Tenth Finance Commission. Every Finance Commission is adding one type of relief fund. When the Ninth Finance Commission came. it gave the Calamity Relief Fund; the Tenth Finance Commission has provided for National Fund for Calamity Relief; and the Eleventh Finance Commission has abolished it and then said let there be a National Calamity-cum-Contingency Fund. Whatever the fund might be, the people are not bothered. You may call it with whatever name you want. But it is the relief that the Governments are providing which matters whether it is at 3:1 ratio between Central Government and the State Government or any other thing. It is ultimately that at a right time right size of relief is being expected by the people.

[Prof. Ummareddy Venkateswarlu]

The Eleventh Finance Commission has recommended for creation of a National Centre for Disaster Management on a permanent basis to monitor the natural calamities. I do not know whether it has been created or not. I have to get the information on it. I do not know whether it has started functioning or not. If it has started functioning, what are the findings of this Committee which has been created on a permanent basis? I want to know whether any analysis is being made or being attempted by this Committee or not, as I said, to got into the past and to see how it is to be analysed. What is the analysis that this particular Committee has made?

Several teams have been sent when there is a drought, on the invitation of the State Government. Drought relief assessment team is sent and ministerial team is sent when there is a demand. The Ministers will be going. There is an inter-ministerial group constituted under the chairmanship of the hon. Minister of Agriculture. But why should we wait till such time that there is an invitation from the State Government? When we are convinced that in about 14 States severe drought situation is prevailing, that too at a very alarming rate, why should we not constitute teams right now and send them to different States? Why should we not get the information periodically? Why should we always say that it is only the prerogative of the State Governments as far as the relief measures are concerned and that the relief and rehabilitation are the headaches of the State Governments?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Venkateswarlu, please be brief.

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Sir, I will take just five more minutes. I am only trying to convince as to how we should have a scientific analysis of these issues. I am not wasting any time nor it is my intention to waste the time of this House.

Here, several teams are being constituted. By the time, the relief is actually handed over, how much time is being taken on an average? When there is a drought, it takes a minimum of three to four months by the time all this process is over and then, relief is provided to them. When there is a flood, the same thing happens. By the time the flood assessment team goes to different States, drought will be prevailing there. What is that anybody can see. This is the situation and on several occasions, scientists and study groups nationwide have also suggested that this is one of the very important issues.

Earlier, in the same House when Shri Nitish Kumar was the Minister of Agriculture, he made a commitment on this particular issue that "flood-prone zoning programme" would be undertaken by the Union Government. The entire country is to be covered with this flood-prone zoning programme. What is the progress of it? Has any attempt been made?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI): Have all the States agreed?

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Why not? Is there any discussion with different State Gvoernments, he may kindly put it up to this House. Let us also know if the States are not agreeable. Let us know which States have rejected this proposal. There should be some attempt. This flood-prone zoning programme has not been taken up so far. This is the reason why flood situation is getting from bad to worst.

Secondly, the NCCF, National Calamity and Contingency Fund has been started on the recommendations of the Eleventh Finance Commission, with Rs. 500 crore, which is really a meagre amount looking at the size of this country and also the size of natural calamities which we have been facing. It has been said that it will be further improved by collecting cess from different sources. What is the surcharge that has been levied on the cess to enhance this Fund? When there were natural calamities in Orissa and Gujarat and when there was an appeal from the Government, the hon. Prime Minister and Members of Parliament also have contributed from their funds under MPLADS at the rate of Rs. 10 lakh on each occasion. We did not mind.

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Not all have contributed.

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: At least, many Members have contributed. If he wants to give the figures, he may kindly provide the figures and once again make an appeal. ...*(Interruptions)* If there is an appeal, kindly come forward.

Sir, my suggestion in this regard is that instead of giving Rs. 10 lakh on certain occasions, since the natural calamities have become a regular feature every year in almost all the States, why not on a permanent basis, that every year Rs. 10 lakh is contributed by all the Members? After all, out of Rs. 2 crore, Rs. 10 lakh contribution to the people, who are living under misery, is not a big amount. The Chairman of Committee on MPLADS, Shri B.B. Ramaiah is here with me. Why should not every year, on a permanent basis, Rs. 10 lakh be contributed? ...*(Interruption)* I think, the Prime Minister is already considering increasing this amount. So, every year, there will be Rs. 80 crore contributed by the Members.

On an earlier occasion, the Government had expressed the desire to bring about a model "Disaster Management Act". I would like to know whether they

have brought out that Act and what happened to the recommendations of Pant Committee. These are some of the issues that are to be looked into.

Coming to my own State, I would say that Andhra Pradesh is reeling under drought situation consecutively for the past 5 years.

Sir, when Shri Deve Gowda was speaking, he mentioned that there is a discrimination being shown by the Government of India; certain States have been given more foodgrains under the 'Food for Work' Programme, and certain States have not been given the foodgrains to the same extent. Last year, 22 districts out of 23 districts were reeling under severe drought in Andhra Pradesh. We requested for a relief of Rs. 1,150 crore. That relief was not given, but the Government of India came forward and said that instead of cash relief, they would give foodgrains. We have taken that. Instead of cash relief, the Government of Andhra Pradesh had taken 31.5 lakh tonnes of rice. It is a record quantity, but these foodgrains were utilised for creation of assets, for generating employment—about 35 crore mandays were created for those who were denied of their employment opportunities-and nearly 5.8 lakh assets were created. It was mainly utilised for desilting of the tanks, for improving the water holding capacity. The disiltation process has been taken up State-wide.

This year, the present situation is such that from the third week of June till today, there is no rain, and a severe drought spell is going on. This has resulted in the reduction of the cropped area. There is a large-scale unemployment, particularly in the agriculture sector, coupled with scarcity of drinking water and fodder to the cattle. Out of 1126 *mandals, 929 mandals* in my State of Andhra Pradesh are affected by drought. In most of the reservoirs, the water-level has gone down and there is a shortfall The water level in Singur has gone down from 1717.85 feet to 1706 feet. In Nizamsagar, the normal water-level in the reservoir is 1405 feet, and it has gone down to 1370 feet. In Sriramsagar, from 1091 feet, it has gone down to 1069 feet. In Tungabhadra, from 1633 feet, it has gone down to 1602 feet. In Jurala, from 1045 feet, it has gone down to 1034 feet. In Srisailam, from 855 feet, it has gone down to 783 feet. In Nagarjunasagar, from 590 feet, it has gone down to 503 feet. In Somasila, from 330 feet, it has gone down to 275 feet. In Kandaleru, from 278 feet, it has gone down to 205 feet. We have got nine reservoirs in the State. In all the nine reservoirs, there is a shortfall in the total holding capacity.

Sir, the total cropped area is 81.80 lakh hectares. Out of this, only in 22.07 lakh hectares, the plantation has taken place. That means, only 26 per cent of the total area has been sown or planted. Even in this, in 50 per cent of the area, the crops have dried up. It is a very alarming situation. In a State like Andhra Pradesh, which is said to be the granary of the country, like Punjab and Haryana, a miserable state of affairs is prevailing. So far as coarse grains are concerned, 9.25 lakh hectares are the normal cropped area, but today only 5.21 lakh hectares are being sown. The total cropped area for pulses is 8.66 lakh hectares, but today only 4.43 lakh hectares is being sown. In case of oilseeds, the production has gone down tremendously. Out of 21.55 lakh hectares, only 4.25 lakh hectares are being sown for oilseed production. The total dry crop area is normally 52.54 lakh hectares, but now only 30 per cent or 17.89 lakh hectares are sown. As such, the cropped area itself has gone down and this is a very sad situation.

Lastly, the drinking water supply is also in a very precarious condition.

Now, we are in a situation where we are transporting drinking water on vehicles to most of the villages in our State. How long could a State Government or any individual be in a position to supply drinking water to villages on trucks?

Sir, fodder and seeds are in scarce and there is also need of employment generation. This year, our Government has requested for a relief worth Rs. 960 crore to meet the present situation. Out of this amount, the agricultural sector would require Rs. 550 crore; for drinking water supply, both rural and urban, a sum of Rs. 350 crore would be required; for fodder and seeds etc., a sum of Rs. 60.9 crore would be required and there would also be a requirement of ten million tonnes of rice.

Sir, in conclusion what I would like to impress upon this august House is that the situation, as prevailing, is very bad. The crop insurance scheme in most States is not in operation. Since there has to be a matching share of both the Centre and the States, this scheme is in a very bad shape. It has been proposed by Shri Deve Gowda and Shri Mulayam Singh that loans to farmers should be waived. If most of the States are in the grip of a drought consecutively for four to five years, then how could the farmers be in a position to pay off their loans? The percentage of NPA in the agriculture sector is negligible in comparison to the total NPA of all the sectors taken together. Therefore, several factors need to be taken into consideration for providing relief. What

[Prof. Ummareddy Venkateshwarlu]

is being provided now by the Union Government is not even five per cent of the total demand made.

Sir, in the year 1996-97 demand was made by AP State for a sum or Rs. 896 crore but only a sum of Rs. 142 crore was given. In the year 1997-98 demand was made for a sum or Rs. 1159 crore, but only a sum of Rs. 42 crore was given. In the year 1998-99, a demand was made for a sum of Rs.. 600 crore but only a sum of Rs 265 crore was given by the Union Government. So, in all these three years not even five per cent of the total demand made by A.P. Government was given by the Union Government. The Government has to think about providing long-term relief to the States in order to relieve the people of their miseries arising out of such a situation.

[Translation]

SHRI SUBODH MOHITE (Ramtek): Mr. Chairman, Sir, today we are discussing in the House the serious problem being faced by the country.

Sir, the tradition and history of this country has given an important position to the farmers and we have even many proverbs eulogizing that farmer is everything for us and infact is made the central point of all the things. I have been listening to the lines 'Mera Bharat Mahan' (My India is great) since childhood. Lal Bahadur Shastri gave the slogan-Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan. Then one more slogan became famous that the country will be saved if farmer is saved. But I think this slogan was wrong, because country was saved but farmer got ruined. All leaders of the farmers in their speeches definitely say one sentence that even the Chief Ministers say that India is a country of farmers. But I think, this sentence used in every speech, is wrong. This country was the country of the farmers in the past.

Sir, if we analyse the situation prevailing in the country we find that this is not true. This country was the country of the farmers one hundred and fifty years back when the British came here. At that time the country was called as "Sone Ki Chidiya" (the Golden Bird). The soil of India was the most fertile in the world. Due to regular rainfall, water of this country was of the best quality in the world. India witnessed all the four seasons as compared to other European Countries and these were quite regular. Rising of the sun everyday was almost certain in India, unlike the European Countries where one was never sure whether Sun Would rise the very next morning or not, because Sun has been rising here since the origin of earth itself. And that is why at that time the farmer of this country was happy and prosperous.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, if one really wants to observe the time and phases of starting of ruination of our farmers, one has to read history quite patently and have also gone through each law enacted in this regard. The British found that farmers of this country are quite strong and know how to weaken them. And for this purpose, the British levied taxes. One film has also been released by the name of "Lagaan'. A law for levying taxes was enacted in 1760. according to which, it was made mandatory that the farmers of this country would give 50 percent of whatever they grow in their fields to the Government in the form of land revenue. If any farmer did not pay 50 percent tax, his house was seized, his cattle and other assets were seized. Not only this, if somebody raises the voice, he was shot dead.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, after this Land Acquisition Act was enacted 103 years ago to ruin the farmers. It is true that Land Acquisition Act was brought because thousands of farmers of this country used to consider their land as their mother and for them selling their land was like selling their mother. Therefore, they did not sell their land. There was a strong love bond between farmers and land. No farmer was willing to sell their land. Therefore, the britisher's brought Land Acquisition Act, whenever the Government requires, it can acquire the land of farmers. Act regarding tax and then Land Acquisition Act was enacted. After this, Indian Forest Act was enacted. Today, in the morning, an hon'ble Member was saying that due to India Forest Act, a project has not been completed in 20 years in his area. We still are implementing the legislations of 1760 and 1870 as per our Constitution. Still we call our country an agriculture-based country.

Sir, I would like to say that this country is no longer an agriculture-based country. Our country was agriculture-based when East India company was operating here. At that time, there was only one East India Company, today at least 4000 multi-national companies are operating in this country. How can we agree that this country is an agriculture-based country. At the time of British rule, there was only one East India company and after independence there are 4000 companies. Where will the farmer go and how can we say that our country is an agriculture-based country.

Sir, the kind of scams which have taken place in our country, has never occured in any other country of the world. If I will start speaking about those scams, it would

be deviating from original issue, but it is true that this country is being sold by taking the bribe. If the biggest share, telecom, fertilizer scams have taken place anywhere in the world, it is in India. Not only this the world's biggest fodder scam has also taken place in India. Not only we have encroached upon the rights of human beings, but of animals also. If we can deprive animals from fodder, we do not have any moral right of talking about farmer's right? Therefore, I do understand that no solution can be sought from this discussion.

There is a WTO agreement, We have got commitment towards World Trade Organisation, we have to abide by it. I would like to tell that the hon'ble Minister should review WTO conditions. If conditions are there for agriculture production, it will become very difficult for us. The condition of farmers is very pitiable. They are asking the Government the farmers are facing a lot for their survival. The hon'ble Members are answerable to them. The farmers are very hopeful from their representatives. They think that the representatives can decide about them. It appears to me that we have to discuss this issue here.

I would like to draw your attention towards 'The Economic Times' dated 21st July. It has been reported in it that there are 36 divisions as per the Meteorological Department of India, out of which there are 20 deficit rainfall divisions. It means, rainfall is less than normal rainfall. In 10 divisions, it is normal but it is less than surplus. In six divisions, it is excess rainfall. It means in 26 out of 36 divisions, rainfall is not average. It means more than 50 percent or 60 percent of the country's area is affected by the drought. I can understand what would be the condition of the farmer of the country, whose 50 percent area is affected by the drought. These are official figures. The condition of the farmers of the country is very pathetic.

It is very amazing that on second Wednesday of October, we celebrate "International Day for Disaster Reduction" ...*(Interruptions)* I have taken only three minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have been speaking for the last eight minutes.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon'ble Members are being called according to the time allotted in the list. Any hon'ble Member should not have any doubt in this regard. Time is allotted to all parties, Members are getting time according to it.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: We pledge on 'International Day for Disaster Reduction' that whoever would be in power, would try to check natural calamity. We make this pledge every year in the month of October, but it appears to me that this pledge is taken on papers only because in present scenario drought declined situation is there and not practical one. The problem of drought is well known. It is not so, that this situation has arisen suddenly. It happens every year. Everybody is aware of its dreadfulness. Who is affected by it? The farmers are most affected by it, everybody is aware of it, Despite knowing this every year we discuss this issue in Parliament.

I would like to ask you that when the Government are aware of forthcoming problem of drought, then it could had find out the solution to overcome it. The drought affected farmers have committed suicide, I understand that we would be able to pay tributes to them by finding out the solution. I will not take much time. I would like to tell one valid point, Shri Venkateshwarlu has quoted data of global warming. I would like to submit to the hon'ble Member that this point is very important. He said that as per global warming the temperature of this country will increase by 4 degree centigrade. It means it would be 54 degree centigrade. You know that what is one degree centigrade. I do not consider drought as natural calamity because I am a very analytical person. It is not natural calamity but man made calamity. There are several reasons of drought and one reason is global warming. There are three reasons which can be checked by us but global warming is not in our hand, Meteorological Department makes inadequate predictions, as said by an hon'ble Member. When Meteorological Department says it is going to rain, rain comes after ten days, when it says, it would be sunny, it rains. The Union Government spends thousands crores of rupees every year on water harvesting, but is unable to provide any kind of relief to the farmers. Even today, there is lot of sea-water in Mumbai, but they are unable to provide drinking water and water for irrigation to the farmers.

The hon'ble Minister convened a meeting yesterday. I do not want to embarrass him or dare to say anything to him. I have read in newspapers that hon'ble Minister has convened a meeting of 10-11 States wherein he gave three assurances-the first assurance is that date for insurance cover will be extended, secondly, the date for payment of loan will be extended and thirdly some subsidy has been provided, I feel that it cannot be termed relief. The extension of period for payment of loan can not be a relief because anyhow they have to pay the loan. I

[Shri Subodh Mohite]

feel that it is quite late to convene a meeting on drought on 24th July, as half of the rainy season is over and month of July is waning. Now after passing half of the rainy season a meeting is being convened. I feel we are late. It seems that problem is at bottom and treatment is being done at top. Villages are in grip of drought and meeting is being convened in Delhi. Chief Secretary and Chief Ministers are coming here. I request the hon'ble Minister that instead of going from top of bottom we should start from bottom to top. I feel that there is no need of convening a meeting. I have also stated earlier that why a standard package is not prepared for tackling drought situation when in absence of rains drought was expected. We are discussing drought situation here but what would be the degree and nature of drought next year ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: I am concluding.

Instead of convening a meeting a standard package for implementation from Zero date should be prepared so that there would be no need of convening meetings in comings years. This is the theme of my today's speech.

I come from Ramtek parliamentary constituency which is the most backward area. I am not talking about the State. My area alone suffered a loss of Rs. 900 crore. 90 lakh trees of orange which is a cash crop have been damaged. Shri Muttemwar comes from the neighbouring areas. He knows that newspapers have reported a loss of Rs. 900 crore in my constituency. No work of E.G.S. is being done there. Drinking water is not available but wine is easily available there. Vidarbha is considered a backward area and funds meant for it has been diverted and the Government have no time, to take measures in this regard. This is the reality and I am presenting here. When there was drought the Government was busy in expansion of the Cabinet. Instead of discussing the issue of drought a meeting of MLA's was convened in Indore and Bangalore. In such a situation, where will the farmers go? I do not want to take the name of any person but a Minister in the Cabinet itself has raised demand to provide financial relief.

[English]

Why, you are the decision-maker and you have to take the decision.

[Translation]

He has stated in public that money should be given.

[English]

You are the decision-maker and you are the Supreme authority.

[Translation]

Public is being misled in this regard. I feel that it should be exposed. I would like to inform the hon'ble Minister that so far no survey has been conducted for estimating loss due to drought in constituency of Shri Muttemwar and that of mine. Today itself I discussed the matter with the Collector. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: 55 hon'ble Members are yet to speak. All should speak as per the time allotted to their parties ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Some people from Western Maharasthra have told no compensation would be given for damage to orange crop ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mohiteji, there is long list of Members who want to speak and all the hon'ble Members should get a chance to speak. It is an important issue.

SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Therefore, hon'ble Minister should visit the area. My last request is that Central Government should intervene and provide direct relief to farmers. With this request, I conclude.

SHRI RAM SAJIVAN (Banda): Mr. Chairman, Sir, our country is in grip of severe drought. Most of the parts of the country are in grip of drought and this problem is being discussed here today. I have got several chances in Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha to listen to debate on the problem of drought during last 35 years.

This issue is debated very seriously and unanimous opinion is expressed to deal with the problem of drought. Certain decisions are taken but irony is that after some days all these decisions disappear and nothing is done. The main reason for it is that issues related to agriculture, farmers, villages and poor are raised occasionally and not very emphatically, what after sometimes got vanish. Earlier a slogan was raised- 'Chalo gaon ki aur', what has happened to that slogan now. The objective behind "Back to villages" was that attention should be paid towards problems of agriculture, farmers, villages and poor but that was not done. As a result thereof these problems keep on becoming serious and villages, poor people, farmers and labourers suffer.

Several big plans were formulated. This situation would not have arisen if former Governments, which were party it belonged to had paid serious attention towards these problems, Irrigation projects lying pending for the last 10,15 and 20 years would have completed. But irony is that cost of these projects keep on increasing. How drought problems can be solved if projects remain incomplete. All the political parties, especially the Government should resolve to pay attention and take measures to counter drought problems.

The whole kharif crop of Jowar, Bajra, Arhar, Moong, Pulses and maize have got damaged. The crop of paddy has also got damaged. Several other crops have also got ruined in other areas. I do not think that any Government would provide compensation for loss to farmers, but measures should be taken immediately to provide relief to farmers. We still hope that if it rains in the coming 2-4 or ten days then perhaps farmers will get relief in regard to the rabi crop. From the weather conditions it seems that there would not be any rain in coming 2-4 days and there are apprehensions of severe drought. Thus as per the demands of hon'ble Members. the districts under grip of drought should be declared as drought affected areas.

16.00 hrs.

He can waive off revenue only when it has been declared as famine-affected area. Even the law states that if there is 50 percent loss nothing can be done and unless the information is received that there is more than 75 percent loss, land revenue cannot be waived off. No Government have paid attention towards this point.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH (Satna): Not drought but the country is facing severe famine and for this both State and Central Government will have to make efforts.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not interrupt. Shri Ram Sajivanji, you please continue your speech.

SHRI RAM SAJIVAN: The area of Bundelkhand. which belongs to both of us, is the most affected region and that is why we are much more pained.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: My district is adjacent to his district. His State Government have declared it as drought affected area but my State Government has not declared so far. My State Government should also be asked to take the same step.

SHRI RAM SAJIVAN: His government is helping him and he is seeking our help. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Ramanandji, you speak when you get your chance.

SHRI RAM SAJIVAN: First of all Uttar Pradesh Government declared 26 districts as drought prone districts. Other Governments are also doing the same thing. Our Uttar Pradesh Government is also considering the reports which it has received from other districts. The number of drought prone districts is increasing. We should think about the lacuna of law enacted in this regard. There should be a provision, be any Government to waive off land revenue in the districts where 50 percent area is declared under the grip of drought. But there is no such provision instead the interest accrued on the loan is recovered next year. Therefore, law should be enacted wherein a provision of waiving off interest, loan and land revenue of farmers should be made if they suffer 50 percent loss instead of 75 percent.

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: This is very important thing.

SHRI RAM SAJIVAN: I have seen various governments during last 35 years but no government have made any changes in it. I am sure that even today no government will make any change in this law. If we have the courage then we should ask the Government to make the provision that if there is more than 50 percent loss then the interest and loans of farmers should be waived off. We should ask the Government for the same. But we are afraid that if such demand is raised the Party would not give ticket or we may lose election.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: We do not fear that we will not get party ticket. We are among those who speak in clear cut manner and we always talk about the interest of farmers.

SHRI RAM SAJIVAN: I have put up this proposal here and if the entire House unanimously agree then we should pass it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Government is noting all your points.

SHRI RAM SAJIVAN : Food for work programme has been implemented. Workers and the poors get the work under this programme. However my experience in this regard is that this programme is being implemented for deepening the ponds in drought affected areas. This is true that a condition has been imposed under this Programme that other work would also be done under it but it is not possible to deepen a pond in an area of 15-20 bighas for filling up water whether a number of workers

[Shri Ram Sajivan]

be engaged therefore there must be some relaxation in it. The use of trucks should also be permitted in drought relief works and deepening of ponds so that this work could be done quickly. We do not oppose that roads be constructed, wages be given and rule of man days be followed but law be changed to deepen the ponds and tackle the drought. We should make submission to Shri Ajit Singhji in this regard. Though he is our agricultural minister, he is not concerned with drought because it relates to the problem of power supply, diesel and rural development. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now your time is over. You please sit down. I have got long list of speakers.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM SAJIVAN: My submission is that Ministers of various concerned departments should pay attention towards it. Apart from, there is a need to pay special attention towards the Bundelkhand region. This area suffers drought almost every year and I raise this issue whenever debate takes place in the Lok Sabha on this subject. The Southern part of Bundelkhand and Chhattisgarh is also covered under it. Many parts of Bundelkhand are also drought affected. The crops of this region has dried up. These crops cannot be revived but relief to the farmers can be provided by launching special drive. A scheme has been formulated for Bundelkhand. I do not know whether the U.P. Government or the MP. Government have formulated that scheme but by giving subsidy of Rs. 1 lakh to farmers. U.P. Government have formulated free boring scheme. The Government implement this scheme by investing Rs. 1 lakh in farmers field but the Uttar Pradesh Government resources crunch. I have raised this issue several times. I have raised this issue under Rule 377 also that the Government should provide assistance in free boring scheme and the Minister of Irrigation says that we do not have any such scheme.

Therefore, I would like to say that the Government, be they are formed by any party, are influenced by the people who are elected from Metropolitan cities. Therefore the system should be changed because the people who have been elected from cities and metropolitan cities are not aware of the problems being faced by farmers, poor people as compared to those who have been elected from rural areas. I therefore, request the hon'ble Members, of rural background to get together and force the Government for the development of rural areas.

SHRI CHINTAMAN WANAGA (Dahanu): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak. First of all, I would express my gratitude to the hon'ble Minister of Agriculture as he has announced to give relief to the farmers after convening a meeting of the Agriculture Ministers of 11 States. In the present situation of drought, he is providing assistance to farmers having the land less than two hectare. I do not understand how to describe the situation prevailing in my area. Should I call it flood affected or drought affected? I belong to Thane district, which witnessed the continuous rainfall on the last 25th, 26th and 27th June. On 26th, 29 inches rainfall was recorded. It rained continuously for 10-12 hours which resulted in heavy losses. However, since the last 27th, this area has not received any rainfall. Paddy sapplings are prepared in my area for transplantation. However, in the absence of rainfall, these saplings were not transplanted and dried up. The entire tribal area has been submerged by the floods caused by rainfall. 66 people have drowned, 18 are missing and 25 thousand houses have collapsed. Besides, several schools, hospitals and roads have washed away. About 50 km long railway track of Western Railways has also been washed away. As a result of which railway traffic coming from Mumbai city was paralysed for 10 days. People of my area have suffered heavy losses due to this flood. A Central team was sent by the Government to assess the situation. Thereafter, the Maharashtra Government has demanded assistance from the Central Government.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Government provide assistance of Rs. 600 to an individual in case his house is washed away in the floods. This compensation is given to the people living below the poverty line. Only Rs. 600 are being given for such a big loss. They have to construct their houses also. It has been stated that the assistance would be provided only to those who are living below poverty line. Several small traders have suffered losses. Dahanu is a tribal area under my constituency. There is textile industry in the Bhivandi city. Half of Bhivandi city which has a population of approx. 10 lakh was submerged in water. The other big city Dahanu with a population of about one lakh people was also submerged in flood water. Small traders and industrialists have suffered heavy losses there. But the Government have not made any provision to give them compensation. Those who had taken loan from the banks to start their business have also suffered a loss of about 25-30 lakh. Now it will take 5-10 years for them to restart their business. My submission is whether the Government would again sanction a loan to such people or they will be given a relief in the interest or in income tax.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, my area is affected by drought also. Transplantation of Paddy saplings prepared by the

farmers could not be undertaken in my area. Despite, having such a heavy rainfall, my constituency is facing drought. The issue of water level and water management is being discussed here. Throught you, I would like to suggest that if the Government take any steps in this regard, we can also utilize the funds given to us under MPLAD Scheme for constructing check dams. Out of the total funds given under this scheme, about 10-30 percent should be spent on check dams. Guidelines in this regard should be amended.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Anna Hazare is a well known personality in my State who has placed an example of constructing check dam in Maharashtra for water management. There is a saying in Marathi language-"Pani arava chirava". He has accomplished a great task for water management. Water conservation is essential to tackle the drought situation. The person like Anna Hazare should be consulted for water conservation in the entire country. Drought is a natural calamity and we can not solve this problem permanently, but still water conservation is necessary today.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, discussion was also held here about the level of borewell. Today, water level is going down in the entire country and even in the entire world. There is no check on the depth of borewell. People are competing in this regard also. Suppose I dig the borewell with the depth of 100mt., my neighbour will dig up 300 mts. and the next to him will dig up 600 mts. I mean that there should be water level management. My constituency fall under coastal area. Plantation crop is undertaken in my area for which people use borewell water. There is a competition among people in this regard also. Borewells are dig up with the depth of 700 or 800 mt. According to the report submitted recently that due to the depletion of water level, the ocean water, seeps into the surrounding areas and one day it causes drought there. The Government must think over it.

We should have fodder management also. I hail from an area where dry grass grows abundantly. We provide dry grass to Gujarat and other parts of Maharashtra. Today dry grass is required in the whole country. It is still lying in the godowns of my area. My suggestion is that Government should acquire it. Water is supplied to Mumbai from my constituency. There are three ponds-Lansa, Vatarna and Mansa in Mumbai for water supply. These are situated in my area which is also affected by drought. If it does not rain in the coming days, the dam supplying water to Mumbai will also dry up and Mumbai will face scarcity of water. Water supply to Mumbai is also made from the Damanganga dam in Dadra and Nagar Haveli. This dam has huge water capacity. A dam has also been constructed in Surya Nagar area of Mumbai in my constituency under a tribal sub-plan. But whenever, Mumbai faces the scarcity of water, it leads to drought like situation, as such, the Government get water from this dam. In this regard, my suggestion is that to meet the additional demand of water in Mumbai, supply should be made from Damanganga Ganga dam situated at 150 kms away from Mumbai. The recently constructed dam in my area is also situated at a distance of 70-80 km. from Mumbai. Water supply to Mumbai can also be made from this dam. In this way Mumbai would get enough water.

In the end. I would like to thank you once again for giving me an opportunity to speak.

DR. GIRIJA VYAS (Udaipur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, so far as the topography of India is concerned it is said that even heaven is envious of India which is endowed with six seasons. However it is ironical and paradoxical that 28-30 percent cultivable land of this country always remain drought prone. Similarly, 16 lakh hectare land is destroyed every year due to floods and nearly 1500-2000 people die on account of floods and drought.

Sir, the poor people are the most affected as the flood prone areas comprising of eastern Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Meghalaya, Bihar and other such areas are inhabited by poor people. Similarly, drought prone areas include Rajasthan, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Marathwada, Karnataka and Gujarat. This year Punjab and Haryana have also entered into the list of drought prone areas. This phenomenon goes on increasing every year. As the hon. Members who spoke before me have also submitted that if we look at the history of natural calamities during the last hundred years we will find that every year we have been suffering on account of the ever increasing fury of drought. Drought is likely to occur every third year in future. In this situation the House should seriously brood over the reason of such phenomenon and the ways and means to tackle such situation.

As far as the reasons of it are concerned, whether it be mountain ecology, the merciless exploitation of ground water or destruction of forests due to developmental works like building of roads and other such activities nobody can deny the fact that all these factors have adversely affected rainfall. Sir, it has been noticed that there are areas where drought occurs time and again and people have to face the sufferings of drought every third year. Presently, drought has gripped the States of

[Dr. Girija Vyas]

Rajastahan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa etc. It we recall the drought of 1987 in the country one finds that 58 to 60 percent of the land area was affected by drought, 287 districts were reeling under famine and 166 millions people had to suffer on account of it. However, the way the situation was tackled during the premiership of Shri Rajiv Gandhi was lauded not only by the ruling party but also by many hon'ble Members of the opposition and other political parties. The reason was that proper arrangements were made at that time to tackle the drought situation. Arrangements were made to provide relief to the affected people.

Sir, at that time late Shri Rajiv Gandhi the husband of our leader of opposition hon. Sonia Gandhi had himself visited that region in Rajasthan which was situated adjacent to parliamentary constituency of an hon. Member of Gujarat to meet the people suffering due to drought. He not only assessed the shortage of foodgrains but also made arrangements for the distribution of food grains to the farmers affected by drought and provide jobs to the people. Even today, the arrangement made at that time are appreciated. Since then such arrangements and administrative competence was never visible at the time of subsequent famine and droughts.

Sir, presently the drought and famine have occurred in nearly 14 States of the country and on the basis of the report which is likely to come in the coming week. I can say that more than half of the country is likely to fall victim to famine. The situation in Karnataka is very bad. In view of the shortage of drinking water in every district, the State Government have demanded more funds from the Government of India. In Madhya Pradesh Soyabean and Millet crops have been completely destroyed. The rainwater harvesting situation in Tamil Nadu has improved, however, it is very difficult to describe the sufferings of coconut growers there. Saurashtra and the Kutch region in Gujarat are in the grip of severe drought condition. Kalahandi, Bolangir and Koraput (KBK) in Orissa are faced with the scourge of severe famine. The twin States of Punjab and Haryana which used to protect us under such circumstances are themselves in a pitiable condition.

[English]

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Mr Chairman, Sir, the hon. Member has just mentioned about KBK Region of Orissa and that during the Congress regime they had initiated a programme for that region. It is true that when Shri Narasimha Rao was the Prime Minister he had come to Kalahandi and announced a long-term action plan worth Rs. 4,500 crore to be implemented in KBK Region. But to our utter dismay, only Rs. One lakh was sanctioned then and that also for soil testing and purchase of an ambulance. ...*(Interruptions)* Today, this Government has come up with a genuine long-term action plan for KBK Region of Orissa. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

DR. GIRIJA VYAS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it wouldn't be in the fitness of things if the hon'ble Member raises such political questions. By mentioning Orissa I only meant to say that the situation there is very bad. K.B.K. region of Orissa is a very backward area and separate budget allocation was made therefore by the Government of Shri Rajiv Gandhi. If he interrupts me like that then may I ask him as to how much amount was allocated by the Central Government and utilised in Orissa at the time why it was hit by a severe cyclone? It is a matter of long drawn debate.

[English]

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Sir, the Planning Commission had brought out a book.

[Translation]

She may read that book then alone will she come to know how much assistance was provided.

DR. GIRIJA VYAS: Sir, I would like to tell the hon. Member that I have read that book. Through you, I would like to draw the attention of the House towards Rajasthan. The name of Rajasthan appears not only in Indian newspapers but also in the newspapers published all over the World. There is a hearsay in a village in Rajasthan to which Col. Sona Ram Choudhary belongs. Once the mother of famine asked her son, the famine as to where she would look for him if any thing untoward happened to her. Then famine told his mother that he had a permanent dwelling in Rajasthan though some times he used to visit Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, however if she had to look for him she should look for him in Rajasthan only. This is the reason that Rajasthan has to face famine all the time. It is not for the fourth but fifth year that Rajasthan is facing severe famine.

16.31 hrs.

(DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA *in the Chair*)

We may have some relief if we take into consideration the data of the last year however 18 districts were affected by it. The situation as on date is that out of the 32 districts 31 districts have been affected by it.

It will not be an exaggeration if we say that all the 32 districts are affected. 330 lakh people and 400 lakh cattle have been affected by it. 90 percent of the crops have been affected by it. The people had sown the crops as per the announcement made by the meteorological department regarding the early south west monsoon whether it is the rainfall of 17-18 June or 21-22 June there had been some rainfall till 2nd July so the farmers had completed 40 percent of sowing. Out of which pulses comprises 41 percent, oil seeds 42 percent and other crops that includes millet was 41 percent. However presently the situation is such that 100 percent crops have been destroyed.

I would like to draw your attention to the geographical condition of Rajasthan. The Western region of Rajasthan has maximum livestock and this region extends from Ganga Nagar to Jodhpur via Barmer. The situation in that region is more grave. On the one hand there is severe famine and on the other hand our region falls along Pakistan border. There might have been good monsoon or otherwise and the irrigation system might have been in place or not, but the fact remains that there was no crop over there during the previous year and all this happened due to the apprehension of war. The situation is even more grim as of now. The question of cattle feed is already haunting. Besides, the factor of social system is also there. In one region people keep animals for their livelihood while in another region or say the hilly areas, the ground water level has gone down by more than 500 meter while there is yet another region which generally witnesses rain but the rain has not occurred there for the last five years. We do have areas there which come under irrigated areas, but Indian as well as Pakistani troops are camping there. All those things have made the conditions pitiable and difficult in entire Rajasthan.

We have frequently sought assistance for Rajasthan from the Central Government. I must make it clear that I do not intend making any allegations against the Central Government. I was just amazed to listen as to what was being spoken by an honourable Member from Andhra Pradesh. I do not want to give any data, but I must say that this Government is particular in providing assistance only those who are in the N.D.A. and to those M.Ps. who could led their support to the Government. As I was just now referring that 18 districts of the State were hit by drought during the last year. ...*(Interruptions)*

DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV ((Alwar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister of Agriculture is sitting here. I have had a discussion with him. He has told that the Government of Rajasthan has not so far declared Rajasthan as a drought hit ...*(Interruptions)* Why the matter is being so much delayed in spite of the fact that you have your own Government there? Your Minister is in deep slumber. ...*(Interruptions)*

DR. GIRIJA VYAS: You should say all those things when you get your turn. It is at the moment my turn to put things. I was telling that 18 districts of our State were hit by drought. Contrary to this, Andhra Pradesh was having only 6 percent deficit which got Rs. 148 crore and three lakh tonnes of foodgrains as assistance from the Centre whereas Rajasthan did not got even a single penny even though 18 districts of the State were hit by the drought. Likewise, in other States, which are ruled by the Congress Party, or by some other party which do not form part of the B.J.P. or its partners are deprived of monetary assistance from the Centre. I would like to draw your attention to the areas where 40 percent of Kharif crops have been destroyed and Rabi crops are also likely to be destroyed.

Protection to the cattle has always been a focal point in Rajasthan. We need to make arrangement of 27.8 quintal of foodgrains. I have made a demand from the Centre and I am hopeful that as our colleague was saying and he should support in getting Rs. 165 Crore released from the Centre which has to be allocated for making arrangements for cattle protection in Rajasthan.

The hon. Minister of Agriculture has always been sympathetic towards Rajasthan but the irony is that while the Agriculture Minister is taking care of the drought while the disaster management is being looked after by the Minister of Home Affairs. Now how they will have coordination and how to provide succour to several States like Rajasthan is a big question, which must be taken into consideration.

I would like to be thankful to the Central Government because it has made an arrangement to supply free of cost water to the State through railway for the last nearly three years and my constituency has derived maximum benefit out of it. However, recently I have come to know and to which I would also like to have the attention of the Govt. drawn through you that water being supplied especially to Rajasthan through railway will now no more be free of cost and that it would be a paid service. In such a situation I would like to request the Government through you that the said supply of water through railway should not be stopped particularly in view of the fact that the State has recorded only 25 m.m. rain since 17th June and water is being supplied in different places of the State through tankers. My request to the Central

[Dr. Girija Vyas]

Government is that it must provide us funds on regular basis so that water supply through tanks may be maintained and that it must also ensure free of cost supply of water through railway.

The concerned Minister is sitting here. I would like to submit that several districts including mine have been provided funds for the purpose of sectoral reforms. A sum of Rs. 74 Crore has been provided in this regard. Earlier there was 20 percent share now it is 10 per cent share. Similar arrangement was made in respect of Alwar at the time of drought. Here once again I would like to request that the 10 percent share in regard to sectoral reforms may kindly be waived off.

Much of the problem that has been cropped up is due to the fact that the drought management has not been done properly over the last five years. Such situation is created when the State talks only of its own interest in drought whereas proper management is missed by both the State a well as the Central Governments. The most important thing is that there should be a plan for Desert management. But the Plan is made when there is no rain. The hon. Minister of Agriculture should at least stick to what he announced yesterday. He has spoken about postponement of debt recovery. But I would say that the Government should instruct the State Government from here that they should not only postpone the recovery of loans but also be completely waived off alongwith the interest amount considering the drought situation over these.

I am also thankful for the proposal of providing C.R.F. money to the farmers having more than two hectares of land. This will benefit a large member of farmers. But it should not be only a paper work and it must read to the targeted people. There is a need of a plan, machinery, funds and coordination between the Union and the state Governments. So that there is no dispute. The important thing is that people should get the information through some system and all the decisions that are taken must be communicated to the people. Everybody is aware that such a vast areas of our country is under the grip of drought. The condition of women and the poor is no secret. They have to fetch water from distant places. Their children have to face starvation. The concerned Minister is not present here but I must remind that in 1987 Rajivji had assured to provide money to the women and child department separately. That time I was heading that ministry. He talked of nutrition in respect of women. Regarding the availability foodgrains particularly 60 million tonnes of foodgrains about which there was so much publicity on T.V. on yesterday, that must be distributed properly not only among the people B.P.L. category but also among the A.P.L. families. That is what I demand from the State Government. There are nearly 31 lakh family belonging to B.P.L. category. People are living in worse condition. They should also get foodgrains.

Employment is very important our therefore. 'Food for Work' scheme must be implemented soon. The State Government particularly drought hit States must get free of cost foodgrains especially the States which have not got this help for the last five years. Similarly, productive works should be undertaken. 25 percent works which are carried out without any proper planning and hence there should be a change in the norms whether the matter concerns with Madhya Pradesh or Rajasthan. If things are not done in a planned manner, we will not be able to ensure development and cannot fight against drought. Afforestation work should be linked with drought work. Desilting of canals should also be taken up under 'Food for work' programme.

Similarly, there should be a permanent scheme, Semi-Permanent scheme and contingency plan in regard to drinking water problem. Today it was the first Address of the hon. President. I do not want to take much time of the House because all the Members want to put their points about their respective constituencies. However, this much I must say that Plan Management is a must whether it is D.P.A.P. or D.D.P. or the National Watershed Development Programme. Had we utilised water in a prudent manner, we must have been able to tackle with the drought situation. I would also like to say that you should not only immediately initiate work in regard to water harvesting, but also constitute a standing committee comprising of some technical people and some Members of Parliament, because people are aware that every man needs 2464 cubic water, but he gets only 900 cubic. If there would be proper arrangement, whether it is surface water or ground water, the water will not be wasted, it can prove helpful.

Alongwith it he said, that the President has expressed hope and the way he has expressed his views in regard to future generation is very good, but what can be said of the generation whose 70 percent population is affected by drought and five year old kids living in villages have not seen a drop of water and you are talking of school for them. In these circumstances, it is the duty of Union Government and State Governments to do physical verification in time and should defer loan recovery and loans. Alongwith it the relations of Union and State Governments should be cordial, because the problem can not be solved by passing ball in each other's court. Our

main concern is that to save the coming generations of 21st and 22nd century from malnutrition, so that a healthy generation comes up.

The women shall not have to go for 10 kilometers to fetch water, we may get pure water, we may get food; to ensure all this proper management is required. Therefore a poet has said:

"Jab Pet mein roti hoti hai, jab jeb mein paisa hota hai;

Us vakt yeh Jarra Heera hain, us vakt yeh shabnam moti hai"

Then only our country, India would be considered as prosperous due to its rich culture, but first of all we require food to eat, water to drink, and fodder for cattle. We have to make arrangement for this.

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Gopalganj): Mr. Chairman, Sir, today the House is holding discussion on drought and flood situation prevailing in the country. Today, on one side large area of the country is affected by flood while on the other side, large parts of Bihar and Assam are severely affected by the floods.

Since 12 noon, the hon'ble Members are discussing this issue, but it is very unfortunate that even after 54-55 years of independence, we are still dependent on rainfall. We have not properly managed irrigation, we have been unsuccessful in controlling the floods, everyear we shed our responsibility by alleging each other in discussion on this issue in the House. Yesterday hon'ble Minister of Agriculture had called some Agriculture Ministers/Revenue Ministers to discuss the drought condition. Some decisions have also been taken, the decision about waiving the loan has been taken. It is said that Crop Insurance Scheme should be implemented. It is also said that drought should be declared. There is definitely drought situation, but at the beginning of the Question Hour, I said that Bihar is adversely affected by the floods and 22 districts of the State are affected by the floods. This problem is not a new one. The rivers coming from Nepal bring flood every year to Northern Bihar, Eastern Uttar Pradesh and some areas of Bengal. In my State, 61 percent of water catchment area is in Nepal. More than ten lakh acres of land has been affected by the floods. Water-logging takes place in nine lakh acres of land. Due to heavy erosion caused by the Ganga river from Buxar to Farrakka the villages are altogether getting vanished. We discuss it in the House and outside also as to how to control floods. Bihar is not having adequate resources to control or to check the floods. Even if it wants to do, it cannot do it because water comes from Nepal and Bihar is not authorised to talk on its own with Nepal, but the Union Government is capable of doing it. The Minister of Water Resources is not present here, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs has said in the morning that Home Ministry is looking into the flood situation. It is very good. 22 districts of my State are affected by flood. Half of Bihar is disconnected with other parts of the country. At dozens of places, rail lines are lying damaged. Lakhs of people have found refuge on river banks and other higher places. The roads and bridges have been badly damaged. National Highways and bridges have been washed away by floods. It has been reported that dozens of people have died. But till now, the State Government and Union Government have not taken any action. We are glad that the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs has said that he would send a central team over there. You have got standby helicopter. People are pining for drinking water, they are not getting it. Water level is continuously increasing in Gopalganj, Eastern Champaran, Western Champaran, Shivhar, Sitamarhi, Darbhanga, Madhubani, Khagaria, Samastipur, Muzaffarpur, Araria and Saharsa, and is causing damage. The Piprasi dam and Bagmati dam are damaged. The bridge over Bagmati river between Shivhar and Sitamarhi has got damaged. The bridges have been broken down due to river flow. The road between Sitamarhi and Muzaffarpur is lying closed. Water has entered every house in Shivhar Block and Piprasi. All crops have been damaged. The Government have been unsuccessful in providing any kind of help till now.

I would like to say one thing from core of my heart. There was a leader named Karpori Thankur ji in Bihar. He had also been the leader of opposition, and the Chief Minister of Bihar. He had repeatedly said in the Legislative Assembly that poverty, helplessness and starvation could not be rooted out in Northern Bihar till the Union Government made effective management of rivers originating from Nepal. If it is done, so much electricity can be generated out of it that we would not only be able to cater power need of India, but would be able to provide power to foreign countries at cheaper rates. Our crops are being ruined. Water has entered the town of Gopalganj. The houses of Collector and S.P. are also water logged. The irrigation system of British time, Triveni Canal System and som canal system have also got damaged. The Bihar Government is not having any resources. Many schemes for Bihar are lying pending with the Government of India. We repeatedly demand resources and aid from the Government of India. So that Bihar may become self reliant and able to complete those schemes and repair those systems. In the British time nine ring dams were constructed on Sarsha bank and

[Shri Raghunath Jha]

the villages were not uprooted. In local language, it is called Dhadki dam. Ring Dams were constructed, but funds are not available for their repair. When banks and Dhadki dam are broken, people get affected by floods. Heavy damages are going to be caused from Gopalganj to Chhapra. Not saying much, I would like to submit to the Government of India that there is a dire need to provide relief to the people of flood affected people of Bihar. There is a need to rehabilitate those, whose houses have been washed away by water. There is a need to provide readymade food and drinking water to them. I demand to waive off their loans. I also demand that drought should be declared in Bihar for providing relief from Bihar. All pending irrigation projects of Bihar be finished and a dialogue should be held with Nepal for control on flood. With these words, I conclude.

[English]

SHRI K. MALAISAMY (Ramanathapuram): Thank you Mr. Chairman, Sir. At the outset, I hasten to appreciate the whole House and the Members concerned for having brought this subject as one of the subjects to be discussed, which is particularly a core subject and it is felt need of the hour. It has been rightly taken for detailed discussion.

For long, Sir, drought has been the usual feature in India. It has been in existence for years and years from time immemorial, but this discussion on drought this time has got a special significance because its gravity and magnitude has been more than the expectation.

Secondly, it has been said that it is wide-spread and thirdly, pretty large-scale areas have been affected. Quoting the figures, they have said that out of 424 districts, more than 320 districts, that is more than two-third districts in the country, have been affected. That is why, it has been rightly taken up for discussion. As far as we could see, India by virtue of its location, its peculiar physical feature and its size, India has been considered to be the most drought-prone country in the world. This is how they have assessed. Drought comes very often because as far as our country is concerned, nearly 68 per cent of the total area are rain-fed and when monsoon fails, drought occurs.

As such, we could see that our Indian economy depends on agriculture and our agricultural economy depends upon the vagaries of monsoon. We are told that of all the monsoons, this South-West monsoon is vital. It plays a very important role in the economy of the whole country. I am told that 75 per cent of the total rainfall is concentrated on South-West monsoon alone. Then, South-West monsoon is responsible for 25 per cent growth of the GDP. Seventy per cent of the total population of one billion people are employed only during South-West monsoon. That is why, we are more concerned about South-West monsoon. When South-West monsoon behaves well, everything goes well. When it behaves bad, and when it fails, everything fails.

As far as South-West monsoon is concerned, I am told, it started very early in Kerala rightly, but unfortunately, during its progress and growth, it has been very erratic. The rainfall happens to be either scanty, or deficient not only in a few States, but as many as 14 States, including Tamil Nadu, have been affected.

According to today's newspapers, this is what our hon. Minister of Agriculture has said. The whole country has been affected; a majority of the States has been affected. What could be its effect? The effect has been well expressed by many of the speakers. They referred to the shortage of drinking water and fodder. They have also said that people are migrating from one place to another highlighting how things are pretty bad and wrong and how the people are suffering at different stages. It has been listed out by many of the speakers and I do not want to repeat them.

As far as drought is concerned, I would like to tell you Sir, that Tamil Nadu is no way in a better position. We are as bad as the other States affected. The rainfall is much low. Out of the 27 districts in Tamil Nadu, nearly two-thirds of the districts, that is, 18 districts including my Ramanathapuram Constituency are affected by drought, which is due to deficient and scanty rainfall. This year, the percentage of rainfall has very badly come down.

I will take a minute to tell you how the storage position in the reservoirs in Tamil Nadu has declined. My colleague from Andhra Pradesh has stated that there was a decline in the normal storage of water in their reservoirs that was marginal. As far as water storage in reservoirs in Tamil Nadu is concerned, we have reached a precarious situation. In Mettur, as against the normal level of 140 feet, the storage now is 41.40 feet. As far as Bhavanisagar is concerned, the storage is only 35.10 feet as against 105 feet. In Amaravathi, it is 56.17 feet as against 110 feet. In Periyar, it is 111.40 feet as against 152 feet. In Vaigai, it is 25.40 feet as against 71 feet. In Krishnagiri, it is 41.75 feet as against 52 feet. In Sathanur, it is 72.7 feet as against 119 feet. In Papanasam, it is 50.55 feet as against 148 feet. In Manimuthar, it is 58.5 feet as against 118 feet. In Petchiparai it is 2.70 feet as against 48 feet. In

Perunchani, it is 9 feet as against 77 feet. In Parambikulam, it is 9.13 feet as against 72 feet. In Aliyar, it is 60.80 feet as against 120 feet. In Tirumoorthy, it is 33.88 feet as against 60 feet.

What I am trying to highlight here is that there is not even one-third or not even 20 per cent storage. This is what I am trying to say. The total storage at present is only 25,024 million cubic feet as against the normal storage level of 78,666 million cubic feet. Not only the monsoon has failed, but the storage position in the reservoirs also is found to be very bad. This is why, our dynamic Chief Minister has studied the situation very carefully and she visited Thanjavur and other places and took the initiative to launch a special relief programme with an amount of Rs. 164 crore and odd. For Madurai and Coimbatore, she has given a relief amount of Rs. 36.08 crore. In addition, she has initiated change of cultivation practices.

One more important factor that affected the sowing of paddy has been the non-release of water from Mettur Dam and other sources. Due to this, nearly one lakh hectares have not been brought under cultivation. With the result, the shortfall in the foodgrain production was 5.04 lakh metric tonnes; nearly 132 lakh mandays have been lost, and the loss in terms of value was nearly Rs. 260 crore. I am citing this example to highlight the magnitude of the problem in Tamil Nadu.

The condition could be grave in other States also but the submission I want to make is that the condition is equally bad in our State. As far as the remedies are concerned, many of our friends mentioned a number of points. As a student of management, I have been taught that a single problem will have more than one solution. Now, the problem is that the rainfalls minimal and, therefore, the storage position is low.

17.00 hrs.

Sir, many States have come under the grip of drought. What is the remedy? We can think of dividing the remedy into two parts-long-term remedy and short-term remedy. Many speakers have said that this is a recurring affair and why is the Administration so silent on that? Why are they not taking a permanent measure? What could be the long-term measure that would enable us to get rid of this problem? One problem leads to the other. Many speakers have suggested many things and I am inclined to suggest that we should have an effective water policy. Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar has mentioned as to how the Government has been lacking in its efforts for having an effective water policy. I endorse his views and would like to say that this country needs a proper water policy that could be useful for every one of us.

Sir, secondly, inter-linking of the rivers is a must and is also a long felt need. But unfortunately that aspect has not been given enough thrust. As far as the thanks and wells are concerned, I would like to mention that the sub-soil water table is going down everyday and there is scarcity of water. What should be done? I would suggest that more and more percolation ponds should be constructed.

Sir, next I would like to mention about water conservation. As a short-term measure, generation of sub-soil water table and rain harvesting should be made one of the important principles for water conservation.

Coming to management of drought, it is to be analysed whether something is wrong at the organisation level or at the manpower level or at the operational level? Many times crisis management is resorted. It warrants all out effort.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI K. MALAISAMY: Sir, you have given so much time to so many other Members but you are not willing to give me even two to three minutes more.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have given you much more time than allotted for you.

SHRI. K. MALAISAMY: Sir, I would take another three to four minutes to conclude my speech. Till that time please allow me to speak.

Sir, during drought management three things are to be kept in mind. They are, planing, preparation and performance. It has to be seen whether they have assessed the situation correctly or not; whether there has been proper planning and preparation; and finally whether they are performing efficiently. The top officer goes to the spot and he cuts across hierarchical disciplines in taking decisions and at the same time he deploys all the resources available so that the crisis is handled effectively.

Sir, what is the basis for providing Central assistance to States? There should be some scientific and objective basis for arriving at the requirement of assistance for undertaking relief measures.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now. I have given you much more time than allotted.

SHRI K. MALAISAMY: Sir, while doing this kind of gigantic physical operation, cases of misuse and corruption also come into play and on many occasions the intermediaries take away the major chunk of the assistance provided. So, a foolproof system should be devised so that the assistance provided reaches the beneficiaries.

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA (Sambalpur): Sir, I must begin my speech by offering my warm greetings to the Meteorological Department... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Acharya, two people from your party have given names and time for it is fixed. If both of you want to speak, you have to conclude earlier.

[English]

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (Cuttack): Sir, I am withdrawing my name in favour of him. So, he will be the only one speaker from our side.

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA: Sir, so far nobody has spoken form my Party and this is a serious matter and our State is also very much affected by this calamity.

Sir, I would like to begin my speech with a warm greetings to the Meteorological Department for their correct forecast of the monsoon this year?

I fail to understand as to how they did forecast a very good and normal monsoon this year! By doing so, I should say, they misled the whole farming community, the entire Government and everybody. Therefore, my warm thanks to that Department! In future at least they should not give such 'correct forecasts'.

I need not go into detail on the national scenario of drought and flood situation, as all the hon. Members who have spoken so far have vividly described it. A major part of the country is now affected by drought situation and two-three States are reeling under serious floods.

As you know, out of 142 million hectares of cultivable land in the country, around 100 million hectares of land is rain-fed. The remaining 42 million hectares are dependent on irrigation. The 100 million hectares of rain-fed area contributes to about 30 percent to 35 per cent of the total foodgrain production in the country. Therefore, the Government may not have any problem so far as foodgrain production is concerned. We heard from different Members, hon. Member and ex-Prime Minister Shri Deve Gowda also mentioned it, that there are enough stocks of foodgrains with the Government and most of them are stinking in this warehouses. Therefore, there will be no problem for the Public Distribution System so far as foodgrain stocks are concerned. The people who would be suffering most due to this unprecedented drought situation in the country are the small and marginal farmers.

In the morning I was listening to the speeches of Shri Deve Gowda and a few other hon. Members. They were talking about discrimination that is sometimes shown by the Union Government against some Sates. Sir, I want to draw your attention, and through you the attention of the hon. Minister of Agriculture who has just left, to an important issue. The hon. Minister of Agriculture convened a meeting yesterday of representatives of some of the drought-affected States. We were surprised to know from the newspapers of the day before yesterday that Orissa, which is one of the worst affected States was not invited for the meeting. I have no way out but to agree with Shri Deve Gowda and other Members who made those remarks about discrimination. It was only after our Chief Minister Shri Navin Patnaik contacted the Union Minster of Agriculture and requested that Orissa should also be invited to the meeting, at the eleventh hour, that an invitation was expended to Orissa.

I do not understand how the Central Government or the Ministry of Agriculture decides these things. The Agriculture Secretary was sent by the Union Government to Orissa on 19th and 20th to take stock of the situation in the State. Very surprisingly, he made a statement in Bhubaneswar itself that the situation in Orissa was not alarming and that everything was all right there. He could, perhaps, make such an observation because there was a very good shower for an hour or two in the temple city of Bhubaneswar when he arrived there. Perhaps that made him give such a statement that the situation in Orissa was not alarming. I do not understand how the officials of the Union Government make assessment of the situation. If this is the situation, you can imagine what would be the fate of the millions of farmers now suffering due to flood and drought situations!

As I have already said, I would not go into the details of national scenario. I will just mention certain points about my own State. The whole world knows that for four consecutive years, the State of Orissa has been suffering from different types of natural calamities. Everybody knows about the super cyclone of 1999 in which thousands and thousands of lives were lost and

many properties were destroyed. Orissa is still reeling under the after-effects of that super cyclone. Subsequently, in 2000, there was a drought in more than 50 per cent of the Districts of Orissa. The State had again faced unprecedented flood last year, and this year there is this drought situation.

This year again, there is a drought situation.

As you know, the economy of our State has totally crumbled due to these consecutive natural calamities year after year. And, under this situation if the Union Government officials make the observation that everything is all right in Orissa, nothing is more unfortunate than that.

Here, I would just like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister. I am sure, he must be having the correct report. The rainfall position in my State in June, 2002 is like this. The normal rainfall should have been 219.0 mm whereas the actual rainfall was 108.9 mm. Similarly, in July—I am having the report up to 19th July. 2002-the normal rainfall should have been 351.60 mm whereas the actual rainfall was 84.45 mm, which is (-) 62.08 per cent of the normal rainfall.

There is an alarming position due to this scanty and erratic rainfall in our State as well as in other parts of the country. As regards my State, there are three-four major irrigation and river dam projects. The biggest one is Hirakud Dam which falls in my constituency. In Hirakud, the dead storage level is 590 feet, and you will be surprised to know that the actual water level is only 594 feet. So, it is only four feet, and this four feet is also due to rain on 19th and 20th July. So, it is a precarious position.

Likewise in Rengali River Dam Project, 109.72 mm is the dead storage level whereas now, the actual level is 110.12 mm. This is the report up to 15th July.

Similarly, in Upper Kolab, 844 mm is the dead storage level, and now the actual level is only 845 mm. It is just one foot extra.

So, Sir, the State irrigation potential cannot be made use of at this crucial juncture to save the Kharif crop. It has already been destroyed.

Now, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the paddy position. Around 60 per cent cultivation is through sowing of seeds and 40 per cent is through transplantation. Through direct sowing has been completed in many districts of the State but the rice crop, in general, has only survived with poor growth, and Beushaning has been held up. The germination of seeds sown in uplands has been affected due to moisture stress. Rice seedlings in nursery beds have turned sick and stunted. Further transplantation could not be started due to want of adequate water in the field.

Sir, due to high temperature, evaporative loss of water from the crop fields has increased significantly. I give you one example. The daily evaporation at Bhubaneswar since 10th June has increased by about 40 per cent. This has accelerated the water loss from the soil. Low soil moisture supply to the plants on one hand and high transpiration loss from the crops on the other have adversely affected the crop condition, particularly, the paddy crop which is the major crop in the State, whose water requirement is generally high.

As has already been said by other hon. Members, there are manifold repercussions of the situation. Though there is thermal power production, we mostly depend on hydel power. As I said, the water level is very discouraging, it will affect the hydel power production as well. Ultimately, it will also affect the Rabi crop.

Sir, another thing where I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister is this. We have experienced severe drought situation in 2000 after the Super Cyclone. At that time, everybody thought about human beings and nobody thought about the animals. We all know that thousands and thousands of animals in the rural areas died because there was no fodder for them. So, I think, it is the prime duty of the Government of India to look into this problem of animal by giving them enough fodder.

Sir, due to this situation, the ground water level is depleting everyday. I would not say that all the tube-wells are defunct but most of the tube-wells are getting defunct because of the depletion in the ground water level. the hon. Minister of Water Resources, who hails from my State, is also present here. So, the Central Ground Water Survey Board should be put to use immediately. The State Governments should be extended all the help. In order to have more drinking water facilities, more tube-wells should be dug in all the States. I do not say that it should be done only in Orissa, but it should be done in the entire drought affected areas.

Sir, please give me 2-3 minutes, and I will conclude my speech. I want to draw the attention of the Government to another aspect. You may say that it is not directly linked with the flood and drought situations, but I would say that this problem is linked with the

[Shri Prasanna Acharya]

farmers. Wherever there are no irrigation facilities, there is drought; but wherever there are irrigation facilities and wherever there is proper production-in some pockets-the farmers have no market to sell their products. This distress sale of paddy particularly in Orissa, in Chhattisgarh and in some such States, almost killed the farmers. When there is no rain, the farmers are starving and the commonmen are starving; and when there is irrigation system and when there is sufficient production, there is no market for the farmers to sell their products.

Some hon. Members have made this point and as I said, this is my feeling also. Sometimes, I feel that the Union Government is not giving equal treatment to all the States, to tackle this problem. When there was distress sale in Orissa, we broke our heads before the Food Corporation of India, before the Agriculture Ministry, before the Food Ministry, etc., but there was nobody to look into the problem.

My suggestion is this. The drought situation is prevailing now and I know of yesterday's meeting taken by the Agriculture Minister, where some decision had been taken and some assistance had been declared. My Government has also asked for three million metric tonnes of foodgrains, particularly of rice. My suggestion to the Government of India and particularly to the Food Ministry is this. Please do not dispatch paddy for storage purpose only to other States like Orissa, which will be just to facilitate some other States which have some political clout here or whose leaders have some political clout in the Government, who can blackmail the Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. The time allotted to your party is only eight minutes, but you have already taken 13 minutes.

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA: Poor States like ours or the parties like ours are the sufferers of this. No doubt, we are in the NDA and we will continue to be with the NDA. We are sincere supporters and we do not believe in the politics of blackmail and we do not believe in pressurising the Government on every matter. Due to this, there is nobody to listen to us. Therefore, my humble submission is that whatever foodgrains that are available in the godowns of Orissa or Chhattisgarh or any other small States should be consumed first during the drought situation and then only, we should dispatch foodgrains form other States. Just to facilitate some kind of storage or stocking in other States, they are dispatching foodgrains, particularly rice to those States. This is not a good system and they are not doing justice to such States, by means of this. This is my submission.

As some hon. Members have mentioned, I feel that it is a welcome step that an amount of Rs. 60,000 crore has been earmarked for constructing road from Himalayas to Kanyakumari and from Atak to Cuttack, that is, from North to South and from West to East. It is a very welcome step. But from the First Five Year Plan onwards, there are so many irrigation projects which are pending.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. There are other hon. Members to participate in the discussion.

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA: I will conclude within a minute. My humble submission is that whatever projects are pending should be cleared first. I will give you only one example of Orissa. There are a few projects in my State. In my own constituency, there is a project called Aung Dam Project which is pending since the last 40 years. Dr. Ayodhyanath Khosla was a great engineer of this country and who was, once upon a time, the Governor of Orissa and this project was his brainchild. That took about 40 years to get the sanction of the Technical Advisory Committee alone. Thanks to my Minister, we got the sanction.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. Kindly cooperate with the Chair and conclude.

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA: I am concluding. Therefore, my humble submission to the Government is this. This a very serious and a precarious situation that the whole country is facing. The Government of India should have proper coordination with different State Governments and should come up with a very concrete planning to face this situation.

Last but not least, let not the Union Government discriminate between different States.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V.PATIL (Latur): Sir, it has been decided not to have the 'Zero Hour' and Lunch Hour ever tomorrow and continue with the discussion. It seems the reply will be given tomorrow.

[Translation]

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH (Rajgarh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, once again we have gathered in this august House to hold discussion on famine and flood as we have been doing in the yesteryears. But no concrete results have been achieved so far and even this time also, we do not hope much from the Government. Last year the hon. Minister of Rural Development gave reply on the discussion held on flood and famine. The Government took one complete year to decide that the reply to his question should be furnished by hon. Minister of

Agriculture and Minister of Irrigation, hon. Minister of Rural Development has a comparatively lesser role to pay. What should we expect from this Government. Reason behind these wrong policies, or wrong decisions was that we depended less on the people's representatives and more on the bureaucracy in order to combat the problem of flood and famine. This was the reason that the States did not get the funds as demanded by them due to which people affected by flood and famine could not be given funds needed by them.

Moreover my colleague has told that the hon. Deputy Prime Minister Shri L.K. Advani would look after the disaster management while flood and drought would be looked after by the hon. Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Irrigation. How a person who could not tackle the problems and terrorism created by human beings can tackle natural calamities, I am unable to understand it. ...*(Interruptions)*

What does the report of Meteorological department say South-West Monsoon arrives in the second week of June and the entire country was anxiously waiting for the onset of Monsoon so that people could sow their fields, But all the predictions of the Meteorological Department under the Department of Agriculture proved wrong. The report says-

[English]

"The Indian Meteorological Department has predicted a normal 2002 South-West monsoon. Quantitatively, the rainfall during the period June to September 2002 for the country as a whole is likely to be 101 per cent of the long period average rainfall."

[Translation]

I.M.D. says this. What is more ironical is that they do not get satisfied with this. After misguiding 16 crore farmers of the country, affected by flood and drought, they further predict:-

[English]

"It has also predicted 2003 monsoon to be quite close to long term average'.

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM (Badagara): It means next year also we will have drought.

[Translation]

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH: Infact this year they could not predict rightly and are making predictions for the next year...*(Interruptions)*. What type of Department and Government is it which is giving wrong information to the farmers in this 21st century of this scientific age. The Department of Agriculture could nct do anything even after wasting one valuable month from 16th June to 16th July. Thereafter the hon. Minister of Agriculture awakens on 16th July. This is the news published in the newspaper 'Hindu' dated 17.7.02.

[English]

Delayed monsoon worries Government.

[Translation]

The Government awaken after sleeping for one month and the hon. Minister of Agriculture says'.

[English]

"The Union Agriculture Minister, Shri Ajit Singh, reviewed the situation with senior officials of his Ministry, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, and the IMD."

[Translation]

and later it was concluded after the meeting:

[English]

"Later he said that a contingency plan was in place and an officer of the level of Joint Secretary would coordinate relief for farmers."

[Translation]

And again the same mistake that an officer of Joint Secretary level i.e., a bureaucrat would provide relief to al the farmers affected by drought as also all the people affected by flood, which is a matter of shame for the Ministry of Agriculture. It is the result of these wrong decisions that today we find that the area of cultivation of Pulses and oilseeds has been restricted considerably in poor States *viz.* Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, it is only because we did not take right decision at the right time. If we see the number of floods and famines that occurred in the last 200 years ...*(Interruptions)* I will not take much time.

Broadly speaking, drought, in the last two hundred years, has taken place for around 45 times and the maximum number of (578) drought has taken place in our country between the year 1970 arid 2000. I would like to present some figures in connection with the

[Shri Lakshman Singh]

assistance given by the Central Government to drought affected areas. State of Bihar asked for Rs. 1003 crore in the year 1998-99, but was given only Rs. 11 crore. Then Rs. 701 crore were demanded by Bihar in 1999-2000 but was given Rs. 38 crore. In 2001-2002 Bihar asked for Rs. 735 crore, but the Central Government virtually gave nothing. The Madhya Pradesh Government asked for Rs. 251 crore in 1998, but the Central Government gave nothing. The reason behind was that we all held demonstration under the leadership of hon. Chief Minister and hundreds and thousands of farmers came here. We asked for 556 crore rupees, but were given only 38 crore rupees. Last year, we demanded for 253 crore rupees, but the response was that our case is under consideration, and we have not received any amount till date. This year we have demanded for 600 crore rupees due to severe drought, but we do not know what we would actually get. Maharashtra and Punjab are also having the same fate. Rajasthan had asked for 113 crore rupees last year, but not even a single Penny was given.

[English]

Karnataka asked for Rs. 903 core, but not a penny was given.

[Translation]

Result of wrong policies is that today we are given wrong figures, and wrong information is given to the House as also the country. Government figures show that the number of persons living below the poverty line in 1973-74 was 55 percent and in 1999-2000, during the tenure of the present Government, it deceased to 26 percent—this is the claim made by the Government. And contrary to this, what the eminent Agriculture Scientist Dr. S. Swaminathan, who brought 'Green Revolution' in the Country has stated would be more correct than the Government figures. He says that 260 million people in the country live below the poverty line. This number is much more than the figures showing 26 percent. That is why claim of the Government that only 26 percent people in this country live below poverty line, is totally incorrect. I would finish my statement with some figures, I would not deliver just a general speech. 130 million hectare of land in the country gets eroded every year. Area affected by drought in the country was 55.3 million hectare in 1974, which increased to 74.6 million hectare in 1996. Then how one can say that poverty has been eliminated when the area affected by famine or drought has increased. If famine has increased, this would lead to more poverty.

A very good survey has been published in the 15th May edition of an English Magazine "Down to Earth'. They have evaluated the areas worst affected by drought in the country. You would be surprised to know the case of a district in Andhra Pradesh called 'Anantpur'. Our hon. M.P. of T.D.P. is not present here, the case of this district is—

[English]

"Water was never so scarce as it is now with an average rainfall of 520 M.M. Its history is replete with one of finest India's water harvesting traditions. Some five thousand tanks harvested enough water till the sixties."

[Translation]

Five thousand ponds were there in this district alone and water harvesting was done there.

[English]

"This sustained traditional agriculture. Till the seventies, these tanks ensured prosperity. Legend has it that in the 15th, till the 18th century, its local markets used to sell pearls and diamonds along with groundnuts."

[Translation]

This district was called land of jewels however, this district has become the land of rocks due to the wrong policy of the Government.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have taken fifteen minutes whereas your party allotted only ten minutes for you.

[Translation]

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH: I would like to make the last point. I admit that long speech is not going to solve this problem. Devegauda ji has rightly stated that Ganga-Cauvery link project is the necessity of the day. He has rightly said that when Rs. 60,000 can be spent on building road then so much of amount should be spent on those projects which are aimed at channelising water from flood prone area to drought prone areas. I also associate myself to this and urge upon the House that let us unitedly help implement this project.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am obliged to you and admit this that unless people's representative visit people residing in drought and flood affected areas and work

with them, this problem will not be solved and the Government will not be awakened.

SHRI CHHATTRAPAL SINGH (Bulandshahar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, today discussion is being held on flood and drought occurring in different parts of the country. Nearly 14 States of the country are reeling under drought. In fact, it comprises two third part of the country. The unfortunate thing is that, leading grain-producing States are in the grip of drought. States like Western Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana, which used to export grains to other parts of the country are likely to face flood problem in the coming days. Punjab, Haryana, Ganga-Yamuna basin of western Uttar Pradesh which are considered to be one of the most fertile area are presently in the grip of drought. 60 to 70 percent of the crops have been destroyed. Even if there is rainfall in coming days and crops are planted, there will be no yield in the absence of further rainfall. If the climatic condition in these areas is not changed, there will be no crop production and seeds will not be sown. Especially the sowing of coarse grains has been affected. Earlier while 90 lakh hectare of land was cultivated, this time only 40 lakh hectare of land have been cultivated. Earlier, while millet was sown on 30 lakh hectare of land, this time only 16 lakh hectare of land has brought under its cultivation. Similar is the case with soyabean which was exported to foreign countries in the past and was also a source of foreign exchange. Last year, 51 lakh hectare of land was sown; this time only 18 lakh hectare of land have been sown. Many Members have participated in discussion about meteorological department. No single weather forecast of the meteorological department turn out to be true while it has a set up at large number of experts. It is better to seek services of four pandits for this purpose because chances are that their forecast might prove to be true. There are 26 sub divisions which have received scant rainfall or had no rainfall at all and the experts in meteorological department could not forecast whether there would be rainfall in time or not and kept on misleading the country that monsoon was about to come farmers had sown their fields and the fields were dried. There are 70 water reservoirs in the country. Presently their capacity have reduced to 17 percent only. If there is no rainfall, their 17 percent water will also be dried up and there will be crisis even of drinking water. I am not telling it, rather it is the figure supplied by the newspapers. The traditional means of water storage have also disappeared. Population in the villages have increased and shallow ponds have converted into playgrounds. The Supreme Court has instructed that old ponds should be vacated and should be excavated however, as per my information no State Governments have paid any attention to this direction and now there is going to be a drinking water problem in coming days. Even cattle are dying due to the scarcity of drinking water.

Average rainfall is gradually decreasing in the country. Forest cover is also shrinking at the rate of 1.5 lakh hectare per year. While prior to sixties, 60 percent area of the country was covered with forest, presently the forest cover has decreased to 32 percent and we are heading towards drought condition. One scientist had predicted that if the destruction of forest cover continues and the monsoon condition remains the same, then the condition of Ganga-Yamuna basin will be the same as is the case of the present Bharatpur. There is no facility of drinking water and the means of irrigation is even worse. If the condition of Ganga-Yamuna basin deteriorates further, the country will face the shortage of foodgrain. I would like to make a mention of Uttar Pradesh. Recently, some of the districts of the State have been declared as drought hit. I would like to make no comment on the State Government. In fact, the entire State is in the grip of drought. The district administration did not submit recommendations in time and did not supply the figure in regard to the percentage of crops destroyed in the districts. This is the reason that the State Government could not declare drought in time. Bureaucrats have no concern regarding the death of the people and cattle. They do not have time to visit villages and see the condition there.

Bulandshahar is a prosperous district, however, 60 to 70 percent of the crops have been destroyed there. Even if there is rainfall, the situation there can not be revived. Presently, 14 districts have been declared drought affected and so people were worried as to what was going on. Several districts of Bulandshahar, Agra and Kanpur commissionaire should have been declared as drought hit area much earlier otherwise people become anxious because if the Government adopts the policy of neglect, how the drought situation will be tackled.

Sir, presently the Congress people are blaming that the Government is not doing anything. The Government is not providing full assistance. Although it is natural calamity, however, it is due to the wrong policy of the Congress in the past that the country is unable to tackle the drought situation unable to tackle the drought situation. 55 years have elapsed since independence of the country and out of the 55 years, the Congress have ruled this country for 45 years. It did not implement even Hanumantaiya Report in these 48 years. Whatever has been said by hon'ble Devegowda ji is correct. Hon. Prime Minister has envisaged a major scheme for building roads with the objective of connecting every village with roads.

[Shri Chhattrapal Singh]

All the major cities will be connected by roads. Similar schemes should be prepared in the field of water resources. Besides, regarding the water resources schemes lying pending for 20 years, the hon'ble Prime Minister has said that these projects will be taken up first then other schemes will be taken up. First of all, the farmers of the country will be protected. The country will be saved if the farmers are saved. If the farmers are not saved, the country will not survive either.

Sir, Ganga water keeps flowing and only two canals from Ganga river have been constructed. One upper canal has been made in Haridwar and the second one has been made in Narora. After that there is no canal on Ganga river for one thousand km. There is no single canal from Ganga river all over Bihar. Similarly, there is no canal in eastern Uttar Pradesh. ...*(Interruptions)* Lift canal caters to the need of irrigation at a smaller scale. Unless there are major projects, nothing substantial can be done. Water is flowing in vain. Bihar is afflicted of flood and floods are also occurring in Brahamputra river in Assam. Floods are occurring in North East. It is irony of the situation that at the same time people are dying due to flood and drought in the country. Here people die due to heat and Loo and also due to cold and rainfall. There is hardly any country in the world where people die in every season. ...*(Interruptions)*

DR. RAGHUVASH PRASAD SINGH: People also die in riots. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI CHHATTRAPAL SINGH: You people are responsible for this.

Sir, I would not like to go into the data. However, the fact is that in the year 2000-2001, 2694 people have died due to flood and drought. If we add in it the number of people who died in earthquake in Gujarat, the figure will shoot up to 22,633. It is a very unfortunate situation that people are saved neither from Loo for from flood. Besides, water table is also falling. The tubewells that have been installed by the Government are all lying dried. Fifty percent crops have been damaged where there are some amount of water. The way temperature is increasing, it seems that remaining planted crops will also be damaged. Maize crops will be destroyed if temperature goes up and there will be no grain left in it. Similar will be the fate of other crops. Crop production depends on climatic condition. The Minister of Water Resources is present in the House and I would like to submit to the Minister of Agriculture that attention should be paid to complete those 20-25 projects which are lying pending. Water should be diverted by way of digging canals Arrangement should be made for irrigation by way of providing electricity to tubewell otherwise it will be difficult to tackle the drought situation. Suggestions have been given regarding flood for work scheme and I am associating myself with that suggestion. The hon. Minister comes from Western Uttar Pradesh which is a sugarcane producing area. The dues of sugarcane farmers are outstanding against sugar mills. If the outstanding dues are given to the farmers, they will invest money for improving agriculture. On the one hand dues are recovered from farmers on the other hand dues of the farmers are not paid to them. The amount of interest is heaping on farmers. In case of default they are imprisoned. Thus double standard is adopted with farmers which is quite oppressing. I am sorry to observe it. They also have right over the Government fund still they are being put in jails. The matter should be taken up with State Government in this regard and such thing should be stopped. It is not only your department but the Ministry of Health should also prepare themselves to fact the drought situation that may take place in coming days. It will have to ensure that diseases may not spread at the time of drought. If disease spread, it will take very dangerous form. The Government will have to arrange for drinking water. More and more financial resources will have to be arranged for installing India mark pump. The Government should increase the budget for agriculture in coming days. Only then, the Government will be able to tackle the situation more efficiently at the time of emergency.

Presently, other countries are crying about WTO that subsidy on agriculture should be reduced, however, America is increasing subsidy given to farmers. They are telling us to reduce the subsidy. You should not succumb to the presume exerted by other countries and should pay attention to farmers. I would like to suggest that subsidy should be increased in agriculture sector.

[English]

SARDAR SIMRANJIT SINGH MANN (Sangrur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, somebody from Punjab also should speak. It is an important agricultural State. We have been totally ignored. Will you please give us some time?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You will get a chance.

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Mr. Chairman, it is ironical that we are holding discussion on drought in the monsoon season. People say that farming in India is just like gambling and the actual Minister of

Agriculture in India is the monsoon itself but not Ajit Singh Ji. Monsoon has betrayed us this year and the Government has been exposed. What kind of management is this? Hon. Prime Minister is the head of disaster Management. What happened to that commission? There is disaster everywhere. Where is his management? People are dying due to flood and drought. Hon. Prasanna Acharya ji of Orissa has gone. He was saying that the Orissa Government was not invited in the meeting. The Government have already left Bihar but at the same time Orissa also. Discrimination was committed even in the matter of providing funds also but the same treatment was shown in inviting in the meeting. Is this justice? Why they were not called? 16 States, 183 districts and 971 blocks have already been declared 'Drought Prone Areas'. These areas witnessed rains in monsoons but this year there were no rain. That is why today we are holding discussion on drought. Besides, the Government have given figures of 524 districts in this book but 320 districts out of these are affected by drought. I would like to know from the Government whether 183 districts are included in it or not. What is the calculation. Whether the Government do not even go throughout the newspapers!

"Yada yada Hi Dharmasya Glanirbhavati Bharat,
Abhyutthanam Adharmasya Tadatmanam Srijamyaham."

The Almighty appears on earth whenever there is any loss to the religion. I doubt that Almighty may not have knowledge about the atrocities being committed here otherwise he could have appeared. So, it seems that the Government do not go through newspapers. It is published on front page of Hindi newspaper 'Hindustan' in Bihar dated 22nd July, 2002 in Bihar-'Kudrat Ke rang' Kahin Jhamjham Baarish, Kahin Baadh, to Kahin Sookha'.

Some places in Bihar are facing flood while some parts are reeling under drought. The report says–"Poor farmer in Siwan district has started to use his standing crop of paddy as fodder for animals. His pocket has emptied due to continuous operation of diesel pump set. The entire situation indicates that all the people in district Siwan are crying due to drought and they are calling it famine. Its not that clouds do not get formed or winds to not blow, but rains do not take place. I have given an example. I am surprised to see the report with the Government where so many districts and States have been left out. Even Bihar and are left out. Rains occurred late at some places there. It is also said in Ramcharitmanas that when the crop dries up, rain has no meaning.

Mr Chairman, Sir, I request the Government to get the reports and see as to how many districts have undertaken paddy sapling. 6 districts were already under the grip of drought. Farmers have ruined financially as they are bearing diesel expenditure from their own pocket. Shri Lakshman Singh Ji was just now reading from the report that as compared to other States, foodgrain was provided to Bihar under 'food for work' programme, of which one lakh tonnes foodgrain was totally rotten which was not procured by the people. Bihar also did not get funds from the National calamity contingency Fund, while other States got it. I level allegations on the Government for committing discrimination. A memorandum was submitted by the Government of Bihar. A special team was sent there, enquiry was conducted in which it was found that crop worth Rs. 976 Crore got ruined. We also gave memorandum to the Government but no action was taken on that. Some of the States of the country are affected by floods while the others are affected by drought, but besides flood and drought Bihar has been wrecked by the discriminatory attitude of the Government. One crisis can be overcome, but Bihar is facing crisis from three sides. The Central Government have not given the assistance of even a rupee. Bihar is a poor State but discrimination has been committed to it. I would tell about it in short. Bihar was not given even a single rupee from the National Calamities Fund. The 11th Finance Commission made recommendations for it but the Government committed discrimination even after dividing Bihar. Bihar was divided on the basis of area and the funds of National Calamities Fund was also given on the basis of area by the 11th Finance Commission. The Commission is of the view that average of the losses suffered during the last ten years be considered while providing funds. Very few natural calamities occur in Jharkhand. Floods take place there. Occasionally one or two districts have floods. Everyone knows that Barh district has been ruined because of overflow of waters in rivers of international level. Districts from Gopalganj to bordering area of Nepal viz. West Champaran, East Champaran, Shivhar, Muzaffarpur, Vaishali, Chhapra, Siwan, Madhubani and Darbhanga have been ruined. Dams broke there and houses were submerged. Roads of Sitamarhi, Muzaffarpur were blocked. Till yesterday 12 to 15 persons have reportedly killed. Besides we are still receiving reports ...*(Interruptions)*

DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: He is speaking on Bihar only, please speak on Rajasthan too.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yadav ji, please speak when your turn comes. Your name is there in the list of Members who would speak, please speak then only.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: I will speak on Rajasthan also. But gross injustice has been done to Bihar. Bihar has experienced injustice by nature as also by the Government. Bihar has been ruined by floods, drought as also the Government. Gandak, Bagmati etc. rivers have played havoc there also. Devastation takes place by the international rivers. Right now, Raghunath Jha raised a question and he has raised it not once but several times. However, the entire responsibility was thrust upon the Minister of Irrigation despite the Minister of External Affairs and the Minister of Finance having been present. When will the agreement between the Government of India and the Nepal Government would take place. Kanwar Sen Committee was constituted by the Reserve Bank of India. It submitted its report that so much devastation occurs in Bihar due to floods, water logging and drought that it is not possible for the State Government to manage it. Hence the Union Government should take the responsibility to tackle these problems. I would like to know as to why the Government do not take action on the report of Kanwar Sen Committee. I demand that the action be taken in this regard. Further, injustice has been done against Bihar as regards to the allocation of the Calamity Relief Fund. Bihar has been allocated a share of 56 percent while Jharkhand 44 percent on the basis of the area. Jharkhan faces almost negligible natural calamity. However the record of the last ten years should be taken into reckoning in the areas affected by the natural calamity. The Government of India should bring improvement in it. Government of India have committed injustice against Bihar.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I demand that agriculture crop Insurance policy should be implemented. The Government of India should take responsibility for tackling the problem of water logging, floods and drought. Indo-Nepal agreement be signed and the hon. Minister should himself look into Gandak phase-2, Kosi phase-II and Bagmati project. Right now hon. Raghunath Jha has said that package is to be given for the water logging in ten lakh hectares of land. However nothing is being done. Rental is still charged from the farmers. Hence these problems need to be tackled on top priority basis.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the scheme of installing one million swallow tubewells is pending with the Government of India and the Government has also given its approval for it. The petition of thousand of farmers are pending under this scheme. However the banks are not co-operating as regards this scheme. Which will fix the responsibility of the bank men to whom shall we ask this question. There is a proposal of providing assistance to 64 thousand individual farmers by the Union Government, State Government is also included in it and the farmers would also contributed on their own. They should get loans from the banks. The name of this scheme is 64,000 million swallow tubewell., This scheme is going to prove very beneficial for the farmers. However, bank are not providing them loans, hence the farmers are a harassed lot but nothing is being achieved.

Besides, barren land development project is pending with the Department of Agriculture. It need to cleared. The transmission line project is of no use to the farmers due to power crisis. Farmer would install pumpsets only when power is made available because the power costs cheaper than diesel and the farmers have been ruined due to the spending on the diesel required for operating pumpsets. The rupee 335 crore scheme pending with the Planning Commission be immediately cleared in that the transmission lines these could be set in order. The scheme be entrusted to the Power Grid Corporation of India for implementation.

18.00 hrs.

FCI foodgrains are not being supplied to the Sitamarhi district. When I talked on the telephone, it was replied that the Minister in charge of FCI has left and it would be dealt with. However FCI foodgrain did not reach Sitamarhi. The connection between Sitamarhi and Muzzaffarpur broke off. Foodgrains is not available there. Devastation is occurring due to the Bagmati and Adwara group of rivers. ...*(Interruptions)* Entire country is reeling under the drought and he is saying that only 32 districts are drought affected. 570 districts in the entire country are in the grip of drought while he is saying that only 524 districts have been affected. Hence the entire area of the country affected by floods and drought be declared famine (calamity) hit and the loans of the farmers be waived off. The loans and the interest component thereof keeps on increasing on the farmers hence it should be wrote-off. Such an action should be adopted through which farmers could face the drought problem. Priority be given to the irrigation and farmer be given assistance, else the farmer would be ruined. ...*(Interruptions)* Everything is being ruined in this regime but the farmer is still progressing despite all the calamities. Hence farmers should be given top priority. Our's being agriculture based economy, Government should provide assistance to the farmers to face the problems of floods, drought and water logging.

[English]

SHRI A.K.S VIJAYAN (Nagapattinam): Hon Chairman Sir, this august House is discussing the drought situation in the country. I thank the Chair for giving me an opportunity to speak on this haunting problem.

The Indian sub-continent is so vast that natural calamities in various forms affect the country one and at the same time. Droughts and floods have become recurrent features. If one part of the country is hit by floods, another part of the country is hit by droughts. It is 55 years since we have attained freedom. The successive Governments have failed over the years. National disasters cause a great threat to national resources. But we have not evolved a viable mechanism all these years.

It is true that vagaries of weather and fury of nature are unpredictable, but mother nature will definitely help those who have effective disaster management system. Drought has seriously affected our people. More than the drought, it is our systemic failure that has hit us hard.

Sir, India assumes the top position in foodgrains production. That is our mainstay. In a thickly populated country like ours, food production must be given top most priority. Even when we rank first in foodgrains production, people below poverty line (BPL) are on the increase. People who are left with just one meal a day are more than 37 per cent of the total population.

Our efforts must be on to overcome this situation. There must not be any let up. At the same time, care must be taken to ensure that neither droughts nor floods affect our target for food production. This can be achieved only with a vision, dedication and political will. Overall growth of the country must be ensured by the Centre. National Democratic Alliance or for that reason any future Government would depend on the coming together of regional parties. So, it is the bounded duty of the Union Government to ensure National Disaster Management effectively in all the regions.

Short-term relief measures like doling out two to five kilograms of rice or 'Food for Work' schemes cannot be a lasting solution. That is why, we have a cycle of bad monsoon and badly affected food production as recurring events.

Shri K.L. Rao, the then Irrigation Minister in the Government of India chalked out a plan to link river Ganga with river Cauvery. Had it been put through, we would have wiped out drought in many parts of the Central India and Southern India.

Cholamandalam comprises of Thajavur, Thiruvarur and Nagapattinam used to remain the rice granary of Tamil Nadu. Now, people with parched throat look for the trickling water in Cauvery. Even drinking water is a problem there now, leave alone water for irrigation. Agricultural laborers are in a pathetic condition. Some of them are forced to eat rats and die.

The fertile land of Thanjavur Cauvery Delta region used to go for elephants than bulls to thrash the harvest crops. But there is no water in that region now to feed even the bulls.

Linking of rivers and canals for irrigation system and their scientific management are the need of the hour. That will help us to withstand the onslaught of both drought and floods. We should not have rulers who are like King Nero who was fiddling with violin when Rome was burning. Our rulers must understand the ground realities especially when our ground water level is also falling below and failing us.

Agricultural production and livestock situation are the worst hit due to monsoon failure and drought conditions.

So, I urge upon the Government to come with immediate relief measures both short-term schemes and long-term plans.

Agricultural loans must be waived. The interest burden must be curtailed. Subsidies must be ensured when the nature fails. Effective water management policies must be evolved to link the North-South rivers. Diverting of the West flowing rivers must be ensured.

The Garland Canal Scheme can still be thought of. Only with a vision and commitment we can overcome drought.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, we have conveyed to hon. Speaker and also to you that several Members from various Parties want to take part in this debate. They should be allowed to speak. My submission is that you can accommodate as many Members as possible and even the remaining Members can be allowed to speak tomorrow if time permits or they can be allowed to lay their speeches so that everyone will be satisfied. By this way, we can accommodate all the Members who gave their names. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Hon. Mr. Chairman, Sir, as has been said by Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsiji, hon. Members can lay their written speech on the table of the House during the discussion on the Railway Bill. They should be permitted to do so right now else. Tomorrow being Friday, only hon. Minister could give his reply owing to time constraint. All the hon. Members desiring to speak

[Shri Kirit Somaiya]

on this subject should be given an opportunity to speak, be it for five minutes or more.

[English]

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Sir, we do not agree because we are discussing the matter of a grave situation. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs is here. You please sit down.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: When he was speaking no such suggestion from any hon. Member was secured.

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, they do not understand what I was saying....*(Interruptions)* Sir, I plead from our side that those Members who would like to speak on this should be accommodated. And if anyone is left out tonight, please allow them to speak tomorrow if time permits or to lay their speeches. Sir, we want to co-operate with the Treasury Bench and we do not want to deprive any Member from making his speech. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Sir, let me clarify. What the hon. Member said is that anybody who wants to lay his speech can lay his speech. Today, the matter which we are discussing is of a rare consequence. It is the question of drought. We are having the discussion on the Railway Budget every year. It goes up to early morning. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Let it be throughout the night. We do not mind. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the first thing which I understood from the Chief Whip of the Congress Party is that it is not mandatory or compulsory for anybody to write his speech and give. Nobody is compelling. If some of the Members think, with no compulsion, 'I would write it for record', they can do so. That is only a request.

Secondly, I appreciate that this is a very serious situation. All the hon. Members would like to speak. We have no problem. They can speak. Tomorrow is Friday. We will have a little of Zero Hour. So, we will be left with only hour and a half. Naturally, after so many speeches, you will expect the Minister of Agriculture to give a detailed reply.

So, my only request would be that let us try to finish the discussion today and keep the reply tomorrow. That is only my request. Whatever time is needed, we can sit today. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat): Sir, we agree. After the Question Hour, the hon. Minister of Agriculture can reply....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: We can finish the discussion today and the reply will be tomorrow. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: As suggested by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, we will sit today till the completion of this subject and the reply will be tomorrow.

[Translation]

If the House agrees this discussion may continue and the hon. Minister may give his reply tomorrow.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: I was saying because I was informed that the discussion on the subject would take place today and tomorrow. Hence I had divided the speakers in two lists so that some Members could speak today and the remaining could speak on tomorrow. When a decision is being reached I would urge upon you to accept the written speeches of the hon. Members who may remain devoid of the opportunity to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any hon. Member can lay his written speech on the Table of the House if he is so desires. The Members who get an opportunity to speak would certainly speak. Though no one is being presented from delivering speech. Now the the House is agreed to continue discussion on it.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: I am of the opinion that an hon. Member speaking for ten minutes would also listen the speech of 10 speakers also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would request all to speak precisely so that maximum members could get an opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR (Patiala): Mr. Chairman Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me this opportunity

to speak on this very grave and important matter which is touching the life of every Indian today.

It is ironical to be speaking about drought in this monsoon season and in Monsoon Session of Parliament. The situation is very critical especially in the crucial North-West agricultural States of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Chattisgarh, Western Uttar Pradesh and parts of Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh where the kharif crop was partially or to tally failed due to lack of rains.

The Indian Meteorological Department's predictions, as very rightly quoted by many hon. Members today, have been a failure for the month of June and the first week of July. This is a very serious matter. They either do not have the capability to give us the correct information or something is wrong. If this is the case, then there is no point in wasting the taxpayers' money on this.

Sir, I also have information that there is a facility in the Ministry of Science and Technology, known as the medium range weather forecasting system which had acquired a super computer, which developed this system a couple of years ago, costing hundrds of crore of rupees.

Sir, during the last two or three years, it is said that they have acquired another such super computer spending additional hundreds of crore of rupees. It has facilitated and helped them and they have developed that capacity to give a fairly accurate forecast for five to seven days in advance in a reasonably good manner. So, why is it that all these forecasts have not been published properly? Is there a conscious decision not to give this information out? Is there an internal problem with the Ministry of Science and Technology, which is hampering these publications? If these publications had been given on time, I am sure, the farmers could have saved precious money and time in not sowing some seeds for which they had to pay heavy loss.

It was in the Paper today that one farmer had sowed seeds worth Rs. 15,000 which has gone at a loss, and this must be happening all over the country. In Punjab, in the Bhatinda area, they have ploughed their paddy back into the soil.

With the advancement of science, what we need now is good planning. This should be done in advance and we should not have to wait until the crisis is upon us. I believe that there is a report of the Planning Commission which has given Rs. 75,000 crore to be spent over 25 years. Can it not be that it could be done over the next ten to fifteen years so that we get some reasonable insulation against drought?

After having a look at the last three years' budget, I notice that approximately Rs. 60,000 crore have been spent on communications and Plan outlay, and Rs. 42,000 crore on fertiliser subsidies, out of which I do not think more than 50 per cent has reached the farmers. I would like to suggest, through you Mr. Chairman, Sir, that Rs. 1,00,000 crore should be spent in the Tenth Plan and the Tenth Plan should be declared as the Water Plan for India.

Rainfall is said to be between 25 to 50 per cent deficient this season and the water level in the reservoirs is 48 per cent that of last year. What is worrying is that the low moisture content of the soil and the inadequate water reservoirs will stretch this present drought crisis into the next *Rabi* crop in which the wheat is sown in the month of October.

A drought-like situation exists in most parts of Punjab as well. This is partly due to the sequence of the paddy growing.

The underground water resources are depleting at an alarming rate. In my parliamentary constituency of Patiala alone, it has dropped by 30 to 40 per cent. Punjab has always made it known since the reorganisation of the States in 1966, that we are short of surface water irrigation.

18.16 hrs.

[DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH *in the Chair*]

We made it clear that a time would come when over-usage of ground water would be uneconomical to pump. That time has come now. If our waters had not been planned to be given away, Punjab would not have reached this crisis.

Rain water harvesting, crop insurance, saving of forests and trees are our main protections against drought. States like Himachal Pradesh, which have large forest reserves, should be compensated so that they can keep their forests and not slowly give them up to the timber industry and to farming. There should be widespread publicity for the preservation of forests and also we should think of adding in the school curricula this environment subject to teach the children how to preserve the environment and the water, which will go a long way towards water preservation.

Water management and water harvesting in every house should be made a must. The National Calamity Fund should be enhanced and besides planning, water collection holes, fodder banks should also be created so that we can use them in emergencies. The States alone cannot solve the disaster problem. Besides the loss of

[Shrimati Preneet Kaur]

foodgrains, many things like rural unemployment, poverty, drinking water problems, diseases and deaths by starvation of human beings and animals, take place.

Sir, 70 to 75 per cent of the population is engaged in agriculture and without water there is no production and there will be no life. The problem of drinking water is not only concerned to the rural areas but it is part of our urban society and urban living. The urban people are mainly dependent upon tube wells to get their water. If there is no water, we have a power crisis. So, power and water are very much inter-linked. Until we can solve this problem, we are going to continue to having a very miserable existence with no power, no water and our overloaded grids will be more and more difficult to maintain and the problem is just going to escalate.

The power for the domestic sector has gone up by two to four per cent. The industrial sector is also not left out of this. the small-scale industry has been badly hit. They cannot afford large power generation through diesel engines etc. and at the moment even though we are diverting most of our power to the rural sector it is neither the rural sector that is getting enough nor is the urban sector getting enough of it; and hence we have come to this very sad situation today of this drought-like situation.

It is with this dismal and dry note that I end my speech and I thank you for giving me this opportunity.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): Thank you Mr. Chairman. After a long wait you have given me a chance to speak. I come from the area which is one of the most drought-prone areas of the country known as Kalahandi which is part of the KBK region of Orissa. Sir, before I start my speech I want to say that drought has been recurring since time immemorial and it has been seen that the post-Independence Government have done nothing to tackle the problem of drought in the country. Every year there is a precipitation of about 4,000 billion cubic metres of water including snowfall. Out of that, the monsoon rains contribute about 3,000 billion cubic metres of water. For the last 55 years we have been able to tap only 609 billion cubic metres which is hardly 22 to 23 per cent of the total precipitation which we got in the country. We have enough of water which could have saved us from the drought of today.

I would say today that the drought in the country is more man-made than natural. It is because billions of cubic metres of water is running away into the sea. There is a run-up of 1,819 billion cubic metres of water. With this situation, when the meteorological Department made a forecast throughout the country, the Department of Agriculture became active and they planned cropping pattern and how much land is to be brought under paddy cultivation, how much land is to be brought under groundnut cultivation and much land is to be brought for lesser millet cultivation. But, today it has become the opposite. The normal rainfall predicted this year in the monsoon has completely vanished.

It is nice of the hon. Minister of Agriculture to have done his duty by calling all the Chief Ministers for a meeting. I was sorry to hear that apart from the Chief Minister of Orissa, no official from Orissa was invited for that particular meeting. But later on it was realised and the concerned officer was called. So, this clearly indicates the seriousness of the Department in mitigating the drought in Orissa which has been prone to it; since the past two-three years it is prone to cyclone to floods and to recurring drought in parts of western Orissa and parts of KBK region of the State.

Sir, the debate which we are having today is of very serious consequence. What does drought mean? Drought means starvation; drought means malnutrition in the rural areas; drought means over-crowding of the urban areas; drought means migration; drought means evacuation of villages; and drought means shortage of drinking water. I would not like to elaborate on this because after hearing the sense of the house it is evident that most of the country is suffering from drought. In the country, 35 meteorological stations are located in different areas and in most of them, there is a condition of drought.

Sir, there are anomalies in the Relief Codes of the States because drought is usually dealt with by the Agriculture Department of the States. These anomalies which are there in the Relief Codes of the States should be rectified. How do we come to a conclusion that there is a drought until the crop cutting is done, until the Revenue Department gives its report, until the records of Agriculture Department and Revenue Department coincide, until the crop cutting report comes? By that time, it becomes very late. It becomes October by the time first crop cutting takes place in the villages and by that time, most of the cattle, most of the poor people in the rural areas, the agricultural labour who depend totally on agriculture, are completely devastated. So, considering these anomalies in the Relief Codes, the Central Government should come up with some type of legislation or some type of disaster management programme by which immediate and emergent measures should be taken to mitigate drought in the areas. Therefore, immediate steps should be taken.

Then, I would say that there has been a fall in the level of reservoirs throughout the country, which will affect electricity production and growth of industries. Sir, we should see what the water resources of this world were, say 2000 years ago, when the population was very, very less and the rate at which they are depleting. In this regard, I would like to quote from *The Statesman* dated 25th July, 2002. It reads:

> "The situation is worse in developing countries, birthplace of about 95 per cent of the 80 million people added to the world each year", says a John Hopkins Institute study—Solution for a Water—Short World—conducted by Don Hinrichsen, a United Nations consultant. The study believes competition between industrial, urban and agriculture use for water is increasing."

So, where will the rural masses go today? There is a competition for water. The *per capita* consumption of water has gone down drastically. We have not been able to take any steps to mitigate that hardship also, to solve that acute problem of fresh drinking water and water for the farmers. How do we intend to feed our millions of people?

Since you have rung the bell, I would like to tell about my district Kalahandi. I would just quote facts which I have received from my Collector and which he has sent to the Relief Commissioner. Sir, up to 18th in the month of July last year, there was a rainfall of 8,84.3 mm and till the 18th of this month, there has been a rainfall of 74.7 mm only. So, you can very well imagine the condition of the crops. In respect of all the crops which were sown in KBK and Western Orissa, there is a loss of 70 per cent, and with recurrence of drought in our areas, farmers have become very poor. I would mention not only small farmers but also the farmers having 15 acres or 20 acres of land. They have been completely devastated. They have migrated.

I would like to recollect one incident. When Shri A.B. Vajpayee was the Leader of the Opposition, he had visited Kharial, Koraput and Kalahandi areas. People came to meet him. What was the property that a poor lady had? The lady had only one *sari*, but there were three other ladies in the House. The eldest lady was given the *sari* to wear so that she could go and meet the Prime Minister. She narrated a tale of woe. This is the condition of rural areas today; the backward places of India have been negleted for the last 50 years.

I was hearing the speeches made from the other side, the speeches made by Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar and many other eminent parliamentarians from the Congress Party. They were saying that they had done a lot of things during Rajiv Gandhi's time. When he visited Kalahandi, I had the opportunity to meet him. Shrimati Sonia Gandhi had also visited Kalahandi at that time. We received them at the airport. Then, I was the MLA from Junagarh. They visited the areas and some schemes were announced. However, they never took off. The programmes or schemes for making water conservation structures never took off because the Congress Party, under the leadership of Shri Patnaik, was ruling the Orissa State at that time.

Now, the KBK prgoramme has started. The pamphlets on KBK programme are now being distributed. Our Government has announced a long-term action plan for the KBKs, which is worth Rs. 9,000 crore. It is slowly taking off and, I am sure, it will mitigate the sufferings of the poor people and the poor farmers of those areas.

We have got a lot of ground water in the country and that will deplete as a result of failure of the monsoon. Therefore, programmes should be initiated for recharging the ground water. The hon. lady Member from Punjab talked about recharging of ground water. We have to save the forests, ecology, which are slowly dwindling. They have to be restored back to the normal position.

This year, the Earth Summit or the World Summit for Sustainable Development will shortly be held in Johannesburg. About 20 years back, in 1980, when the Earth Summit was held in Rio, Agenda-21 was drawn out. I am sorry to state that not a single clause or not a single article of Agenda-21 was implemented by the then Governments that ruled this country. From 1980 till 2000, for 20 years, Agenda-21 was not implemented.

Before I conclude, I would at least pray and lament to the Meteorological Department and the Agriculture Department that they should make proper forecasts in future because 80 per cent of our nation is bound in agriculture and in rural activities. It is a question of the poor man because the man below the poverty line is going to suffer. The PDS has to be controlled. Today, in certain backward pockets, the PDS has not taken off. Those important things have to be done.

Looking at the calamity that we are facing today, I demand that the drought problem should be declared as a national calamity. As a Member of this august House, I demand that it should be declared as a national calamity. Otherwise, we cannot imagine the horrendous problems which we are going to face in future.

*SHRIMATI MINATI SEN (Jalpaiguri): Hon. Mr. Chairman Sir, drought and flood has been discussed umpteen times in the House. All of you are aware that severe drought is prevailing in many parts of our country. But if there is drought in many regions, States like Maharashtra, Gujarat, UP, Bihar and North Bengal in West Bengal have been facing severe flood. We are a free country. But it is a matter of regret that even after 55 years of independence, the Government has not been able to come out with a comprehensive plan to tackle this natural calamity. The farmers face immense difficulty due to drought. The whole cultivated field parches the peasants cannot irrigate the land resulting in loss of crop and immense hardships for the poor farmer. There is no drinking water, no power and everything is in bad shape. But the Government instead of taking any positive step unfortunately plays a negative role. Erosion of riverbank is intimately connected with flood. Of course erosion of riverbank does not happen only during flood. It goes on the whole year. Ganga and Padma in West Bengal faces erosion severely. The problem of erosion in Ganga has been raised many times in the House. The State Government has tried to draw the attention of the Centre on so many occasions. The State Government has asked for necessary fund so as to tackle the problem of erosion. But I am sorry to state that the Centre has not paid any attention to their plea.

Sir, I represent Jalpaiguri District in North Bengal. The nature and character of rivers and the flood in North Bengal is totally different.

Sir, the situation in flood hit areas of North Bengal is very grim and serious now. In the last 72 hours water level of Sankosh, Raydak, Kaljani of Jalpaiguri and Mansai and Raydak No. 1 in Coochbihar, alongwith their tributaries have crossed the danger mark due to excessive rain.

Sir, I want to state with utmost importance that the flood in the Ghis river in Odlabari of Jalpaiguri has caused severe damage on 200 mtr of national highway No. 31 and 300 mtr of railway line has been severely affected due to incessant rain. The overall loss in Kumargram Block and Block No. 1 of Alipurduar is not known till now. But the loss and damage in Kalchin and cultivated land and ten gardens in Kumarganj block has been immense. The information I have gathered from the administration is that 3 people have died due to flood and 12 people have been missing. 100 acre cultivated land has been submerged due to flood in the two rivers Paro and Garom. Houses of 400 families have been washed away. The Guidebund of Shiltorsha river, which is under construction has been damaged. The slums in Jaigaon have been washed away. The 12 municipality wards in Alipurduar have been submerged under water. 12 hundred families have been affected. 1.2. No. Block of Toofangunj in Coochbihar and Falakata block of Jalpaiguri have been damaged. The rainfall recorded in Jalpaiguri is 2543 mm and 1825 mm in Coochbihar.

I want to draw the attention of the House to a very important issue. The source of most of the rivers in North Bengal except a few is in Bhutan. Recently there has been illegally and unscientifically dolomite and felling of trees have been continuously undertaken in Bhutan. As a result, there is large scale siltation and debris are accumulated in the riverbed causing heavy damage to the flow of the river. The rivers are forced to change direction and so many habitation roads tea garden, forests, sanctuary are being severely affected since last 2 decades. This is causing serious ecological problem. If measures are not initiated right now then the tea industry and tea garden of this region will be totally ruined. The forestry and sanctuary of this area will also be wiped off. Moreover due to annual flood the connection link between North Bengal and the rest of India will also be affected resulting in widespread danger of defence.

I want to emphasise one more important point. The militant activities in North Bengal have taken a serious turn. These militants are being trained in Bhutan by the ISI. They are intruding into North Bengal after training and creating terror. The innocent people are being targeted and killed. These problems cannot be tackled singly by State Government alone. The Government of India must form the joint river forum after consulting the Government of Bhutan. We have raised this important issue umpteen times in the House and we the members from North Bengal had a meeting with the Minister of Water Resources Shri Arjun Sethi and discussed the matter with him. He assured us and said that since the matter concerns a foreign country, he has to discuss it with the External Ministry. After that a decision by the Cabinet will be taken. The Hon. Minister Smt. Vijaya Chakravarthy wrote a letter to me last November informing that a joint team of experts will be formed after consulting the Government of Bhutan.

I would like to know through the hon. Chairman whether the joint team of expert has been constituted after consulting the Government of Bhutan. If it has been formed I shall be obliged to know their opinion, their suggestion and recommendation.

*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Bengali.

Sir ! want to mention another important issue. As per the road development programme of the Government of India East West corridor from Gujarat to Assam has been planned and will be undertaken. This will go via Dalkhola, Chalsa, Balarhat, Telipara, Veerpara, Hashiwara, Sankosh of Jalpaiguri and then reach Assam. The whole programme is totally unscientific, unplanned because this region is flood prone. There are protected forest, tea garden, hilly rivers which will create serious problem of erosion and siltation. There won't be any industrial region and it won't be of any benefit for large section of the people. We have submitted an alternative plan after consulting the State Government and we hope the Government will reconsider its decision and examine our plan favourably. Drought and flood are the two staggering problems of our country. Respective State Government cannot tackle this serious problem due to paucity of fund. The Government of India must evovle a comprehensive plan and assist the State Government so as to tide over the crisis of both drought and flood.

I urge upon the Government to take some appropriate measures so that we don't have to face the problem every year. With this request I conclude my speech and thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in this important discussion.

*SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY (Cuddapah): Speaker, Sir, it is very unfortunate to discuss the drought situation in monsoon season. Through you Sir, drought situation is very severe in our Constituency and my State of Andhra Pradesh. We need to come to the rescue in this harsh situation.

As temporary measures, I would suggest Contingent action plan, waiver of loans, food for work programme, pensions for old and widows, fees waivers for students, fodder and concentrated feeds for cattle, sufficient grant provisions for drinking water and water harvesting structures for augmenting ground water, crop loss compensation to farmers.

As permanent measures, I would suggest National project of Garland canal connecting all river basins in the country should be sanctioned and taken up on par with national highway network. Creating a national water grid. Farming should be given industrial status. Insurance for failure of crops due to any reason should be made available to farmers like any motor vehicle insurance of life insurance. Cuddapah District of Andhra Pradesh be given a Special Development Package along with considering the proposed Gandikota Reservoir, a national project. Power subsidies or free power to farmers be provided as this subsidy is production related subsidy.

*Speech was laid on the Table of the House.

Afforestation should be given top priority. Thank you, Sir, for the opportunity given.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, today this august House is discussing the problem of flood and drought prevailing in the country. It is a very important issue and we discuss it every year but without evolving any solution for the problem.

18.44 hrs.

[SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA *in the Chair*]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, you must have seen and are aware also of the situation in flood affected Bihar. Every year crop worth crores of rupees gets damaged due to flood and lakhs of people become shelterless. Life of thousands of people come on the verge of death. Recently six people including a student have reportedly died in Madhubani district. There is a Harijan Hostel in Balirajgarh. It is a historical and archaeological place under Government of India. This hostel is a two storeyed building. That student was not well for the last two days. He remained in his room but nobody went there to give him food. Other students went to the 'uncha teela' (high place) but he remained in his room. His dead body was found yesterday only. I contacted the District Magistrate in this regard who confirmed the incident and informed that the student was belonging to some other district. The situation is so pitiable that I can not explain. I would like to know from the Government whether any long-term scheme is being formulated to control floods?

Mr. Chairman, Sir, recently, Kamalabalan river originating from Nepal has breached embankment at four place in my Lok Sabha Constituency Jhanjharpur. Bhoothibalan flows from Lokaha to Phulparas. There also the embankment has been breached at one place. There is danger of breach of embankment at one more place in Rajpur. People are taking shelters on trees and at higher places. All the places have submerged. I can not explain the situation prevailing in Supaul, Madhubani, Sitamarhi, Sheohar, Gopalganj, Muzzafarpur, Darbhanga, Khagaria and Saharsa districts. In 1987 also there was unprecedented flood in this area but this time the flood situation has surpassed the previous record. Breach of embankments has resulted in destruction of standing crop in thousand of acres of land. Sudden floods have destroyed the houses and properties of people. People have become shelterless. This time 25 lakh people have been affected by floods in Madhubani district though it was 10 lakh people in 1987.

[Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon'ble Minister has replied that a stand by Helicopter has been provided for the affected state. Before coming to the House, I have got telephonic information that only 2 tonnes of 'Chura' or 'Gur' would be sent by this Helicopter. Will it be sufficient for 1000 people? Only the State Government has sent relief material for the victims. Special relief has not been sent. Hon'ble Minister of Water Resources is present here. I would like to tell him that there is hue and cry among the flood affected people. As it is a very important issue. I have explained my concern.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Kamlabalan, Kosi, Bhootibalan, Gandak, Bagmati and Adhwara group of rivers originating from Nepal have created devastation in the area. Lot of water has been released from Balmiki Nagar to Birpur of Nepal. As result of it rivers are overflowing. I remember that the same situation was there in 1993, 1994 and 1995. Earlier people of Northern Bihar used to get information through Flood Forecasting Network of Nepal and saved their life by taking shelter at higher places. However, this time they did not receive such an information. I would like to know from the Government whether Flood Forecasting Network is working. Will the Government conduct an inquiry in this regard? Secondly, the network should be installed at 16 more places under Indo-Nepal Agreement. At least the Government should provide relief to them and save their life. Long term planning would not be formulated because every time the inconclusive discussion will take place on this subject and the Members of Parliament will think that they have done their duties by just participating in the debate. Therefore, I would like to submit that the Flood Forecasting Network should be extended to the Indo-Nepal border areas including Madhubani, Sheohar and Sitamarhi and Shri Raghunath Jha was stating that the people of these areas do not get the forecast and get affected by the flood.

Sir, this is a very serious and painful issue. I would like to submit that not only the people are affected but the road links have also got disconnected. All the main roads of PWD on Nepal border in North Bihar be it in Ladania, Jainagar, Khajedih or Dharamban have been damaged. People there are unable to move between district headquarters and Babubarahi. The whole Jhanjharpur has been disconnected by the main road which has got damage by the breach of river embankments. People there are unable to get essential commodities like onion and salt from outside. They are dependent on whatever holdings they have at present. We can not imagine how their lives have been disturbed. How they can take their livestock for shelter on higher places when human beings have no place to live. There is scarcity of fodder around the embankment areas. People are taking their livestock for shelter at the embankment. The remaining embankments are also coming in the grip of flood. Even a scanty rainfall in Nepal causes overflowing of water in these areas. I had expressed my concern and stated that a high level central team should be sent there within 24 hours to survey the devastation created by the flood and provide economic package to affected persons. We have told the Government that services of a single helicopter will not serve the purpose. People who are surviving there on the roof tops, tree tops are in distress and army boats in large number are required there to save them. It is unfortunate that people of these areas suffer from flood and drought every six months.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to state the condition of relief work there. I want to say something about the Calamity Relief Fund. as per the provision, the funds given under this fund are used only for the flood relief work. It has no provision for the flood damage repair work which include the repair of the damaged routes. This should be rectified and a suitable provision should be there. Secondly, I would like to state that the Calamity Relief Fund can not be used for the repair of damaged Jamindari dams. The dam in western area of Madhubani has got damaged and will remain in the same condition but can not be repaired from the Calamity Relief Fund. The area will remain submerged and people will continue to suffer but the funds can not be utilized for repair.

Thirdly, no substantial amount is available to construct the washed out houses of people living below the poverty line. Fourthly, after the division of Bihar, scarcity of resources has arisen due to which no new plans can be started. Therefore, I would like to state that flood has become a curse for Bihar and the State has become a permanent flood affected State. The problem of flood arises due to the rain in the water catchment area. ...*(Interruptions)* I would like to make a final suggestion for permancent solution to flood problem. The Government should be sensitive. A survey was conducted in 1991 and 1993 on the rivers flowing from Nepal and a team from Japan also made a visit. It was assessed that the permanent solution is to construct a dam on Kosi river in the Barah area involving an expenditure of Rs. 1200 crore.

All those sites were identified. A scheme for constructing a high level dam for the flood control and management of river Kosi was formulated. it would generate 3300 MW electricity and the hydro power can be supplied at cheaper rates to Assam, West Bengal, Eastern part of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa. If multi purpose high level dam is constructed it may lead to the permanent solution of floods. If high level dams are constructed at the proposed sites of Nunthur, Sisapani and Varrah regions of Nepal, then the permanent solution could be found and it is the only way out to save the flood-affected areas.

Lastly, I would like to say about drought. As far drought is concerned, the Government has declared 12 States namely Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Arunachal Pradesh as drought affected States. The survey in this regard has been conducted and the hon. Minister of Agriculture is well acquainted with the condition of the farmers. He has also held meeting with the Agriculture Minister of States. I would like to say that Shekhpura, Monghyr, Lakhisarai, Rohtas, Arrah, Jahanabad in Bihar are drought affected areas, while South Bihar is drought affected. North Bihar is facing the fury of floods and both of those are fighting with natural calamities. The ground water level has sunk and it is not raining and the fields have dried up. The village ponds have no water. A ferocious situation is awaiting and the crisis of flood alongwith the poverty and starvation is looming large. Hence, these areas need to be freed from famine.

With these words I thank you and would like to submit that whereas gold and silver serve decorative purpose, bread is essential for life. Hence, a long term solution for providing food be found. Besides, water management be made and the permanent solution to the problem of floods be found and a long term plan for the drought affected areas be also formulated.

[English]

SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA (Alipurduars): Respected Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for having given me an opportunity to speak on this important issue. A number of Members have taken part in this discussion and most of them have concentrated on drought. Although I am very much concerned about the drought-affected areas, as more than 14 States have been affected, since a number of Members have already talked about drought, I will confine myself to floods particularly to the area to which I belong.

I belong to Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal. This area is being affected by flood almost every year. Flood has become a regular phenomenon there. A number of rivers like Sankosh, Teesta, Torsa, Kaljani, Paro, Raidak, originate from Bhutan and flow through this region. Since these rivers pass through the tea gardens, the tea industry is also badly affected due to the flood in these rivers. This time even the Cooch Behar district particularly Balabhut which is on the border of India and Bangladesh has been badly affected. It has almost become an island. Hundreds of people have been rendered homeless. We had taken up this matter time and again with the Water Resource Minister and requested him to take it up with the External Affairs Minister so that he in turn could take it up with the Bhutan Government. We had requested the Government to take the initiative to set up a joint Indo-Bhutan River Commission.

19.00 hrs.

This is the only solution. Unless and until, this Commission is set up, the problem of flood in Cooch Behar and Jalpaiguri Districts cannot be solved. Therefore, once again, I demand that this issue must be taken up with the Government of Bhutan as early as possible so that the difficulties of the people of tea gardens in North Bengal and other areas can be mitigated.

Sir, I am equally concerned about wild life. There is a rhinoceros reserve at Jaldapara in Jalpaiguri District. There is also elephant reserve, and it is a tourist place also. There are a number of forests. I demand that in order to protect all those reserves, forests, wild life, an appropriate and comprehensive planning should be made so that the reserves for animals like elephant, rhinoceros, etc. can be protected. If these things are done, I am sure it will also help in promoting tourism.

Sir, I would like to request that in Mal Bazar Sub Division, the National Highway has been affected very badly due to flood water. The rail connection has also been affected. I have already told that it has become a regular phenomena. Therefore, I would request you to accept the proposal for a new railway line from New Mainguri to Jogi Ghopa. It would work as an alternative line. So, once again, I would like to impress upon the concerned Minister that this railway line should be taken up as early as possible. This will serve not only the people of West Bengal, North Bengal but also the people of North Eastern region. It is because people of North-East are always affected due to disruption of rail services whenever any railway line or rail bridge is damaged due to flood.

[Shri Joachim Baxla]

Sir, I have already mentioned that these rivers are coming from Bhutan. Therefore, this is a very important issue. I demand that appropriate action should be taken. Sir, I know that for the maintenance of river banks of Brahmaputra, some money is being allotted by the Central Government. I would like to mention that all the rivers, namely, Sankos, Tiesta, Torsa, Kaljani, Ramsai, Garam, Paro, Raidak and Jaldhaka are ultimately meeting with the Brahmaputra river. Therefore this is my demand that West Bengal should also be sanctioned some money for the maintenance of these rivers. Otherwise, it will be very difficult to control these rivers. We know that every year people of these areas and particularly the tea gardens are suffering. It is because the tea bushes are washed away because of flood water.

Sir, a few days back I visited Lankapura which is near Bhutan. I also visited Jaigaon. There is one river called Hansimara Jhora. I found that all the river beds are rising like anything. If there is torrential rain, we can imagine the fate of the people residing there. The entire area, including tea garden belt will be washed away. Therefore, I demand that the Central Government should take appropriate steps so that some protection work can be taken up and these people can be safeguarded. Some precautionary measures have to be taken in advance. We know that whenever some natural calamity takes place, only then we think of sending the relief material to the affected areas. That is why I would request the Minister to take precautionary measures in advance instead of waiting till the last moment. I know that natural calamities cannot be stopped totally, but we can save the lives of the people by taking precautionary action.

In Cooch Behar two persons have died. The West Bengal Government has already taken steps. They are providing relief materials within their capacity. I know that their resources are very limited. However, they are trying their level best to stand by the side of the affected people. Therefore, I demand that the Central Government should think over this matter and take appropriate action, so that in future we can mitigate the sufferings of the people.

[Translation]

DR. (SHRIMATI) SUDHA YADAV (Mahendragarh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, since morning the discussion on the flood and drought situation prevailing in the country has been going on. I would like to extend by thanks to the hon. Minister of Agriculture for calling on a meeting of the Agriculture Ministers of various States in view of the prevailing drought situation and for taking such decisions in the meeting which would provide some relief to the farmers. The truth is that today the country is in the grip of severe drought. Similarly, the flood situation in some other areas has turned very grave.

I hail from Haryana and the name of Haryana makes one imagine that it is a very lush green State. However, a region in southern Haryana has been reeling under the severe drought since long. Elections to the Legislative Assembly in Haryana were held in 2000. 25 villages of district Mahendragarh in my parliamentary constituency boycotted the elections in protest against the unresolved problem of drinking water there. Let alone the water for irrigation and for livestock even drinking water is not available for humans. The district did not get the normal rainfall even when the rest of Haryana received normal rainfall.

Today the situation is so grim that the women folk have to walk several kilometers to fetch water. The ear of wheat is burnt on the festival occasion of Holi in our region because doing so is considered auspicious. Now the situation is such that level alone the possibility of following the ritual of burning ear of wheat, farmers have not even sown wheat this season. Farmers were expecting a good monsoon as was being forecast but monsoon was not good and in one of the areas not even a single drop was received as rainfall. The farmer is gazing towards the skies in the hop of rain and is extremely worried on the account.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, my region has neither any river nor canals and it is not raining also. The ground water level is continuously declining and the villagers are forced to flee from these villages in such a situation. I would like to present the figures in that the districts of Rewari, Mahendergarh and Gurgaon better known as South Haryana have recorded a rainfall of 680 mm. during the 1993 to 1997, 300 mm in the year 2000 and there was no rainfall this year. If we look at the decline in ground water level after the job in this regard was entrusted to the ground water cell, water level has sunk from 16.77 in 1974 metres to 23.2 metres in 1994. Today the ground water level is below 33 metres in district Mahendergarh and 28 metres in district Rewari in one of the block in my district. The ground water revel is 1600 feet and it is even hard to imagine to extract water through boring. The canals were dig 32 years ago but I won't hesitate even a bit to apprise the House that not even a drop of water flown through these canals and these canals have got filled with soil and have developed cracks along their embankments. Cultivation is being done with the help of water from tubewells because there is neither rain nor the river nor the canals have any water in them. The

dam have been constructed on the perennial rivers in areas where there are being fed by rain water and naturally the water flow has been checked. I we continue to cultivate through tube well water the ground water level would sink so that it would become even hard even to cultivate crops and it is due to this reason that we are not able to think of wowing Kharif Crops as Rabi Crop had not been sown. 90 per cent crop has been damaged in areas where it was sown. The expected development of canal network could not take place despite our best of efforts. The issue of Sutlej-Yamuna link between Haryana and Punjab has been going on for years. The Supreme Court has also given the order to complete the work of link canal so that the dry and parched land of Haryana could gain some water. So far no work has been initiated in this regard which is really unfortunate. The situation in the country is such that some places there is dearth of water and at some it is an excess but we are not able to evolve a mechanism for equitable distribution of water in all parts of the country either due to some political or administrative hurdles. I would submit to the hon. Minister of Agriculture to try to do away these bottlenecks by formulating proper laws in this regard so that the equitable distribution of water could be ensured. Farmers are entirely at the mercy of monsoon for cultivation and he is gazing at the skies in the hope of rains his face is looking faded. Main crops in my region are millet, jawar and gowar. We cannot even think of sowing such a crop which require more water. That crop could be sowed even in low water and today this crop has been devastated 90 per cent. You can yourself assess the situation. After furnishing these figures to the hon. Minister I would like to thank hon. Minister for doing a decent job of postponing the tax realisation through NABARD. However, I would also like to say that when the oil depot can be set up in Russia and oil can be supplied there by connecting it with Assam by laying pipes, why our arrangement for water can not be made. We should try to make such an arrangement that the regions facing scarcity of water should be connected with the water abundant areas by laying down pipes in the same way as the oil is supplied to desert areas from Assam oil fields through pipelines. When the water has become such a precious thing for the farmer and every individual then what is the problem in making an arrangement for water in the above said way. Today the people have deserted their cattle for want of water and fodder and there is a need to provide fodder. Water borne diseases are spreading very fast. There is need to think in this direction and evolve a proper water conservation policy. I am also of this opinion that there is a need to effectively run the watershed scheme and rainwater harvesting programmes. We are talking about rainwater harvesting but as no rain is taking place which water would be harvested. Through you I would like to submit that the schemes and policies formulated after due deliberations in this regard be implemented efficiently. Today there is a need to make arrangement for seeds and foodgrains. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have given five minutes to each here, else it would not finish by the next morning.

DR. (SHRIMATI) SUDHA YADAV: I would like to submit to the hon. Agriculture Minister that he is personally well aware about situation in South Haryana. Both these Ministers sitting here are personally well acquainted with the situation of South Haryana. I would like to submit them to provide a special package there because this region is genuinely drought affected. Today, the situation is such that even the village ponds have to be filled through river.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI C.N. SINGH (Machalishahar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the discussion on drought is taking place and he is not speaking. The Members of the ruling party are so serious about drought situation that only 13 persons are there to speak ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHANKAR PRASAD JAISWAL (Varanasi): He was untraced for entire day, has just come and is saying this to us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You sit down. Shri G. Putta Swamy Gowda

SHRI C.N. SINGH: All these persons are not sitting, the Members of the ruling party are least bothered about drought and flood. Their strength is 13 and it seems that this Government is likely to meet its doom. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record except Shri Puttaswamy Gowda's speech.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: You sit down, why are you disturbing. He is speaking. Let him speak.

[English]

*SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA (Hassan): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am very grateful for having given me an opportunity to speak on this important subject. Permit me to speak in Kannada.

*Hon. Mr Chairman Sir, hon. Members from all sections of this august House have sincerely expressed their anguish about the havoc created by the severe drought in the country. I join them to express my concern regarding this serious situation and I thank you Sir for giving an opportunity to speak on this important issue.

Many States in the country are reeling under severe drought situation. Karnataka is one of the States which has been severely affected by the drought. In fact, unfortunately this is the third consecutive drought year for Karnataka. I would like to mention that the Centre has completely failed in in its duty to protect the people particularly the farmers who are affected by drought.

154 taluks in 25 districts of Karnataka State are in the grip of drought and even drinking water is not available in these places. There is no fodder for the cattle and many people who do not have anything for their living have already migrated to the neighboring States. Our Chief Minister led an all party delegation to the hon. Agriculture Minister and the hon. Prime Minister. He has requested the Centre in his memorandum to release 958 crore of rupees for the flood relief in the States. So far, unfortunately not a single rupee has been released for Karnataka to tackle this problem. The State till today has not received any reply from the Centre in this regard. The Centre is bringing in politics in this matter and that is my complaint against this NDA Government.

11th Finance Commission has recommended an amount of 78 crores of rupees for Karnataka from the calamity fund. The Centre has cleared only 58 crore of rupees and this amount is being paid in two equal instalments. In fact this has become an important national news and the BJP leaders are indulging in an unnecessary propaganda about the release of this calamity fund.

The Chief Minister of Karnataka has done a commendable job in releasing a substantial amount for providing drinking water in the drought affected areas.

When Karnataka has received nothing how some States have got relief funds. Let him sanction any amount to any State but I want that Karnataka State should also get the relief fund. About 238 crore of rupees and more than 10 lakh tonnes of foodgrains have been released to tackle the drought situation. My State also should get its share. There is no need to bring politics in this matter. All the States should be treated equally on the basis of the losses suffered by them due to drought. It is not good for the nation to allow such a disparity to continue in the future. You cannot rule the country in this fashion. Step motherly attitude and negligence of some States by the Centre cannot be tolerated. The farmers will revolt if this kind of attitude continues.

Sir, now I would like to give some suggestions for the consideration of the hon. Minister. During rainy season, huge quantity of water goes to the sea. This loss of water should not be allowed to continue like this. Water should be conserved and stored and this decides the future of our farmer. Unless we develop the capacity to store the flood water we can't find solutions to the multifarious problems of the farmers.

There was a proposal to link Ganga and Cauvery. The Centre has not given its thought to this proposal. The Centre has to take up such innovative and scientific plans and programmes and implement them for the prosperity of our nation. Similarly they have to take up desilting of tanks particularly on the river basins. There are a number of tanks on the Cauvery river basin. We can provide jobs to thousands of poor people. It will enable us to revive the employment guarantee scheme and food-for-work scheme in drought hit States and for employment generation under the Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana project of the Rural Development Ministry. On the other hand you put hurdles to States like Karnataka which is very keen to take up such programmes. Karnataka had approached the World Bank for its assistance to take such a programme. Unfortunately you have not given clearance for this programme till today.

It is high time to take up immediate desilting of tanks on the river basins throughout the country.

While sanctioning the amount the Centre should be very careful about monitoring the schemes. They should ensure that the amount reaches the needy persons. Many times major chunk of this amount do not reach the people to whom the fund is meant.

Sir, recently Central team which had gone to Karnataka could not conduct any survey of the affected areas. I urge the Government of India to send an expert

*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.

team to Karnataka to assess the situation accurately. In the meanwhile I request the hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Agriculture Minister Shri Ajit Singh Ji, to release at least 100 crores of rupees as an ad hoc drought relief fund to save the people of Karnataka from the severe drought situation prevailing in Karnataka.

Once again I thank you Sir and I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

SHRI SHEESH RAM SINGH RAVI (Bijnor): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak in the flood and drought situation. I also extend my cordial thanks to the hon. Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs Shri Pramod Mahajan for their concern to start discussion on the severe drought and flood situation striking the country. Our country is an agriculture dominated country. 80 per cent population is dependent on agriculture. Hence, we should spare a thought for the farmers. Approximately 11 States of our country have been affected by drought. The Minister of Agriculture had earlier declared 11 States drought affected but what relief was proposed to be provided by the Government to the farmers should have been made clear from the beginning. Last time, when floods had struck my district Bijnor on 9th June, 2000, I had demanded to provide a relief of Rs. 50 crore. Five bridges and two roads were damaged but the Government of India had provided only two crore rupees. It might happen that like the previous year when the money for flood-relief was not given, this time also the Government may withdraw from its responsibility of providing relief to the farmers in drought affected areas to repay their loans or their loans etc. are not waived off. We will have to think over it and the hon. Minister of Agriculture should especially think over it. Our's was a agriculture dominated country and there was an old adage 'Uttam Keti, Madhyam Baan, Nishit Chakri Bhikh Nidaan' in vogue wherein the agriculture was considered as the best source of livelihood but today the trend seems to be reversing wherein the job is considered as the best, trade is considered second best and even beggars have gone ahead of farmers who has been relegated to the bottom. Nobody is concerned about the farmers and the Congress Government also had not bothered about the farmers. Today sugar mills are closing down. Sugarcane is not being churned and the farmer is not being paid the price of sugarcane and farmers are in the grip of drought. This scheme had been pending for the last 40 years. It is in view of this that hon. Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee had launched this scheme of gasol and ethanol for the benefit of the farmers. I would like that alongwith drought relief work gasol and ethanol schemes should also be implemented. I submit that the Government has not implemented the announcement made regarding ethanol produced by the sugar mills for use alongwith petrol and diesel. The Government have announced that decision to mix ethanol and gasol with diesel on the lines of petrol would be taken and it is indeed the right step. It is the need of the hour that we should think about the farmer because he is the supreme in the country. I hail from district Bijnor where 60-65 per cent crop has been damaged in drought and the cattle have started dying for want of fodder.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

19.29 hrs.

I would submit to the hon. Minister to devise a scheme for clearing the outstanding dues worth crores of rupees pending against the sugar mill owners in Uttar Pradesh especially in Western Uttar Pradesh. The Government should also provide relief to the farmers at the rate of Rs. 20,000 per acre in those areas where the sugarcane and paddy crops of the farmers have been damaged due to drought so that farmers may survive. The country is facing a severe situation and at least the farmers should be convinced that the Government are bothered about their plight. Hon. Minister of Agriculture is sitting here. I would submit to him to waive off the rent and loans of entire Uttar Pradesh and farmers should also be paid a compensation to the tune of Rs. 20,000 per acre which is in approximation of the losses suffered by the farmer due to drought. Crop Insurance Scheme should also be implemented properly and the State Government should be given instructions to implement it. The discussion on drought is going on in the House. The suggestions given by the hon. Member should be implemented and a scheme be formulated to provide relief to the affected people. Uttar Pradesh is also facing severe power crisis. There is not even a single bigha land in Uttar Pradesh which is not cultivable hence the Government should make special arrangement for providing electricity besides feeding canals with water. If these problems are not addressed in Uttar Pradesh then not only the cattle population but even the humans would be on the verge of starvation and it will lead to a situation of crisis in the entire country.

Sir, not taking further time of the House I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. Lastly, I would like to say that 11 States in the country are in a grip of drought and in view of this drought situation the rent and loans of the farmers should be waived off

[Shri Sheesh Ram Singh Ravi]

besides giving them an amount of Rs. 20 thousand per acre as compensation.

SHRIMATI KAILASHO DEVI (Kurukshetra): Mr. Speaker, Sir, today the issue relating to drought and flood, which is quite serious and an issue of urgent public importance is being debated in this apex House. Several regions of our country get affected of drought every year. After almost 15 years, this year Haryana is also in grip of severe drought as a result of which ponds, rivers and nullahs have been dried up there. Availability of water for irrigation purpose is a different thing, even cattle are not getting water to drink. The crops on thousands acres of land have been destroyed. Farmers have tilled thousand acres of land on which the damaged crop was standing. Farmers have suffered a lot and now looking towards Centre and State Governments for getting financial assistance.

Sir, the area under cultivation of coarse foodgrain in Haryana has declined from 126 lakh hectare to 75 lakh hectare. Water resources have also been affected. Millet and paddy crops have suffered a lot in Haryana and Rajasthan. Kharif crop has cultivated on 232 lakh hectares of land in the country which has declined to 74 lakh hectare. The Union Government have issued instructions to State Governments for implementation of emergency plans to provide relief to affected people under which seeds and foodgrain would be provided to farmers. Along with this drinking water would also be made available. There is also a proposal to implement 'Food for Work' Scheme. Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture Shri Ajit Singh has stated that State Governments have been issued instructions to implement emergency plans. But I would like to emphasize that due to corrupt bureaucracy and failure of Government machinery, benefit of these schemes do not reach to needy persons. Common poor people are deprived of benefits of these schemes and bureaucrats are benefited by these schemes. It is an irony that even so many years after independence we have been able to provide irrigation facilities for 40 percent area only. We have to depend on tube-wells for irrigation but non availability of power makes things more difficult. We have also not been able to develop our canal system to the desired extent. In such a situation not only farmers but administrative officers look at sky for rain. I would like to know that will the Government officials sit over the files. Will the days be spent in this manner. It should not be so. Even 55 years after independence, neither we have been able to develop some system to collect water from other available sources to tackle drought problem nor any arrangements could be made to save crops from flood in flood prone areas. On the one hand we want to develop India as a developed country during 21st century but on the other hand the basic requirement of farmers, who are considered backbone of the nation, are being neglected. The Drought Prone Area Scheme was launched in 1973 but it could not show desired results. The objectives of this scheme were to increase production of crops, productivity of land, livestock and to find out more sources of water, tackle drought problem and help in social and economic upliftment of poor people of the affected areas by providing employment to them. This scheme should be reconsidered, reviewed and re-evaluated so that its objectives could be achieved. Dams should be constructed to stop flood waters flowing waste so that problem of drought could be tackled effectively. The problem of shortage of water in Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat and several other states could be solved if rainy water of Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab is collected by constructing dams which otherwise flows waste. 25,000 Megawatt hydro-electricity can be generated from rainy water of Himachal Pradesh alone. Shahpur Kandi Yojana, Tehri Garhwal Dam, SYL Link Canal for which a judgment has been given recently by Court are such schemes which are pending since long and have been put in cold bag. These projects should be freed from red tape of bureaucracy and implemented with immediate effect. These projects can cover risk factors and earn profit if completed by obtaining loan for this purpose.

I would like to say that option of water-recharging should also be considered. Deep boring can be done to collect water during rainy season for bringing up the water level so that it could be used during drought. It is necessary to stop rainy water of ponds, rivers and nullahs going down to drains. Effective arrangements should be made for that. After construction of Sardar Sarovar Dam and Bhakhra dam no effective project has been formulated by any Government for agriculture sector. It was stated once that Bhakhra Dam would prove to be a milestone in development of the country and it was proved laterly. Today our country needs such more projects for development. Such projects should be implemented and guarded from corrupt practices.

The Union Government have issued instructions to State Governments to enforce Crop Insurance Scheme for farmers to avoid sufferings from natural calamities. This scheme should be implemented effectively. Agriculture should be accorded the status of industry and it should be ensured that in case of natural calamities farmers should get remunerative prices for their produce. As per the cost, sale price should be remunerative. 'Food for Work' scheme is going on paper and it should be

implemented honestly for strengthening financial position of farmers who are considered backbone of the country.

Hob'ble Minister should convene an emergency meeting with Water Commission. Flood and drought are the burning problems of the day and through it this problem should be tackled at the earliest for providing relief to affected people.

SHRI BHAN SINGH BHAURA (Bhatinda): Mr. Speaker, Sir, today the problem of flood and drought is being discussed here. We have witnessed devastating floods in Northern Bihar, Northern Bengal and Assam. In Assam 15 persons and in Bengal 5 persons were killed due to this flood. It is really sad that even 55 years after independence we could not tackle flood problem. It is our failure and lacunae in our plans are responsible for that.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to cite an example of Patiala. Earlier, it used to witness flood every third or fourth year. At times of floods people used to go to king and asked him to offer golden bracelet from the back of elephant to get relief from flood. Later on the king constructed a dam and now there is no danger of flood in Patiala. Therefore, I request the Government to construct a dam to check floods. The reasons for the flood should be found out for protecting interests of the people. This is a Monsoon Session and in present situation its name should be changed.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, people of our country are quite superstitious and they have organized several 'langars.' In my area there is a place 'Nathana' where wine is served in langar to please the God. Its photograph has also been published in newspapers. I request the Government for propaganda against that and advise people not to indulge in such things. Bhatinda district faces acute shortage of wager. Rajiv Water Scheme has been launched there in two districts. Moga, Muktasar and half district of Mansa has been dropped from this scheme. I have written about to the hon'ble Minister but he has not given any reply. People have to go to far flung areas to fetch water but that is also not potable water. Punjab is one of those 12 states which have experienced no rainfall this year. Earlier there had been 221 mm. rains in June but this year only 36 mm. rains have been received. Position of Punjab is quite serious and attention should be paid towards that.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, a mention has been made regarding water in Punjab and Haryana. The time when Punjab and Haryana were divided, Haryana got 80 lakh hectare area of land and Punjab got 1 crore 5 lakh hectare of land but at the time of division of water Haryana was given 16 million acre feet water and Punjab was given 12 million acre feet of water. Haryana got less land and more water. The issue of SYL Canal has also been raised here. Last time your party was in power in Punjab, why this issue was not decided at the time. Why the Union Government kept the issue burning and did not solve this water dispute. This issue can be solved by both the States but the Government do not want to decide it to score political mileage out of that ...*(Interruption)*. Now I would like to raise issue of drought. The debt of farmers should be waived off on the ground of drought. Agricultural labourers are most affected by it. Agricultural labourers are rendered jobless when crop is damaged. Some compensation should be given to them for protecting their interests. Foodgrains is distributed under 'Food for Work' scheme. Large quantity of wheat has rotten in godowns of Punjab. It should be distributed among poor. What is this policy that wheat may rotten but not given to poor. I request to think over this suggestion and this wheat may be given to poor people at Re. 1 per Kg. so that they may be able to combat scourge of hunger and unemployment to some extent. I hope that hon'ble Minister of Agriculture would pay attention towards these points and waive off loans of farmers.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the premium set under Crop Insurance Scheme is very high and farmers are unable to pay that and thus farmers have not taken any interest in crop insurance scheme. Therefore, another alternative scheme should be formulated for benefit of common farmers. I hope that Government will pay attention towards it.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH (Satna): Mr. Speaker, Sir, for how long this debate will continue. I hope that the Members from all the political parties who have given notices under Rule 193 should be given a chance to speak. My name is also there. ...*(Interruption)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Chowdhary Talib Hussain wants to lay down his speech.

CHOWDHARY TALIB HUSSAIN (Jammu): I would like to speak.

MR. SPEAKER: If you want to speak, then you will have to wait for some time.

CHOWDHARY TALIB HUSSAIN: Sir, I would like to speak.

MR. SPEAKER: If you want to give a written speech, then you can do it. But if you want to speak, then you have to wait for some time.

[Translation]

CHOWDHARY TALIB HUSSAIN: Sir, it will be good if I will be allowed to speak.

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. You will be called afterwards.

Shri P.R. Khunte.

SHRI P.R. KHUNTE (Sarangarh): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for allowing me to speak. ...*(Interruption)*

DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, list of names have been given to you and it has been told here that number in the list does not change. My name was seventh in the list. I have asked. ...*(Interruption)* I am waiting for my turn.

MR. SPEAKER: I am checking as to what has happened. I will tell about it laterly.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, you may allow us even if political party does not allot time for that. There is partiality within the parties. I request that before the speech of hon'ble Minister of Agriculture, the Members who have given notices to speak on this issue should be given a chance.

MR. SPEAKER: I have already told that I will permit you to speak.

DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: His name was not there but now that has been included. My name was seventh in the list, how that has changed? I have seen the list myself.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN ((Firozabad): Today, Shri Vijay Kumar Malhotra is not here and Kirit Somaiya is looking after the work. Our friends from BJP are making complaints. They should complain to Shri Somaiya as this was done by him. ...*(Interruption)*

MR. SPEAKER: I explain that. Sometimes, hon'ble Members could not understand the actual position.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, their complaint is genuine. Shri Vijay Kumar Malhotra is not here today and this responsibility has been given to Shri Kirit Somaiya. This confusion has been created by him. so hon'ble Members should complaint to Shri Kirit Somaiya.

MR. SPEAKER: Yadavji, I would like to tell that your name is first in the list but that is another list. So far my first list has not been completed. Mr. 'Khunte's name is last in the first list. Thus no injustice has been done or will be done to you by the Chair. You should not worry about that. Your name will be the first in second list, I have told you in chamber also that you will be allowed to speak. Today Ramdas Athawale's name is not in the last of the list.

Khunteji, now you can start your speech.

SHRI P.R. KHUNTE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, today a debate on drought and flood in the country has been going on in the House since 12 o'clock. ...*(Interruption)* Akhilesh ji, I never interrupt you. Now, as I am speaking, so let me carry on.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: You make a remarkable speech.

SHRI P.R. KHUNTE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, our's is predominantly an agricultural country. Our economy also depends on agriculture. But, it is an irony that every other day, the farmers in this country keep facing drought, flood, insects, hailstorms or natural calamity. Unfortunately, at present, 12 States are in the grip of drought. Farmers in these 12 States are facing severe drought. Chattisgarh, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are worst affected. Some states are facing the furry of floods. Chattisgarh is facing most severe drought of this country. I would like to say that the situation is so serious that people are forced to eat tuber-roots. It is almost total famine. The aged persons tell that the state faced similar famine in, 1963-64, when the situation became worst that the poor peasants and labourers were compelled to search for grains in cow-dung. Now, Chattisgarhh is facing similar condition. The farmers planted paddy in the hope of rain, but rain played truant and paddy planting work came to a halt. The crops which have taken roots are dying without water and in fact, neither the Government are able to tackle drought nor able to face it.

A year back also, Chattisgarh faced severe famine. The leader of opposition, Shri Nand Kumar Sai and some BJP Legislators asked a question to the Chief Minister of Chattisgarh regarding availability of funds with the State

Government to tackle severe famine being faced by Chattisgarh, which has caused exodus of lakh of people from the state and created serious problem of drinking water and fodder for animals.

Sir, in reply to above question, the Chief Minister of Chattisgarh has stated in the Legislative Assembly that the state has a provision of only Rs. 3,00,000. I would like to tell the House that the population of Chattisgarh is 2 crore 7 lakh. This paltry sum is not even enough to provide 'Prasad' to the State's 2 crore 7 lakh population.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to hon. Prime Minister who provided relief to the drought affected and starving people of not only Chattisgarh, but all the four states facing drought under 'Food for Work' and Gaon-Ganga jal schemes. Chattisgarh is facing similar crisis today and farmers, poors and labourers are making hue and cry. But the Chief-Minister of Chattisgarh is not all bothered. The farmers and the poor public is praying rain-God Indra-dev for rain and protecting their crops whereas the Chief Minister is praying for no-rain so that he can seek relief package and make something out of that.

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL (Kanpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I request hon. Member not to say such things that Chief Minister of a State praying God for 'no-rain'. It is not good to say so. He can oppose, but not up to this level.

MR. SPEAKER: I agree with you. Shri Khunte ji, do not put allegation of this sort. Tell what do you want to say.

SHRI P.R. KHUNTE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the farmers of Chattisgarh arranged marriage of frog and she-frog. It was reported by the papers on 20 July. All the formalities, such as rubbing oil and turmeric-paste, pooja, reciting of mantras and even marriage party was arranged, putting 'tika' on forehead and a feast and then the he-frog and she-frog were thrown in water. If you permit, I can read out the entire news-report, but it will take more time. So, this way the public resorted to recital of mantras to please rain-god. The State is facing severe drought. I mean to say that the situation has reached a serious proportion.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is not the case of Chattisgarh alone, throughout the country the farmers have become bankrupt. Who is responsible for pitiable condition of farmers. 55 years have gone by since India became free, and most of these years, except a few, Congress party have ruled the country. Unfortunately, Congress has been ruling Madhya Pradesh for the last eight years and the State is facing severe drought. All the Congress ruled states are facing drought and the people over there are facing famine. Anti-farmers policy of the Congress has rendered the farmers in such a pitiable condition. The farmers are debt trapped. Even a newly born baby in a farmer's family carries the burden of loan on his head. The farmer is hungry, he is debt-trapped whereas the Congress are enjoying. Had the Congress party made adequate arrangements for irrigation the farmers would not have had to face such condition and he would have been prosperous. But Congress did not adopt any policy beneficial for the farmers and failed to provide enough irrigation facilities. Anti-farmers policy of the Congress have rendered the farmers in such a horrible condition.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank hon. Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee for announcing Agriculture policy for the first time in the country. The Government have introduced crop-insurance scheme. The farmers in Congress ruled States are not getting any benefit even under these scheme and they are not getting their insurance claims. Under this scheme, even in Chattisgarh people have not been extended benefits.

20.00 hrs.

How unfortunate it is that even today, crop insurance scheme has not been introduced in Madhya Pradesh. We make lengthy speeches, speak about rights of farmers, but when the issue of their interest and benefit is taken up, we backtrack and shed crocodile tears. It does not behove at all.

I am shocked to see the poor attendance even when the House is seriously discussing the problem of drought. I am not talking about one State, the farmers of 12 States are facing severe drought. ...*(Interruptions)* They have no alternative before them. On the one hand rain has played truant and secondly the Government are not extending any support. They are facing power, seeds, irrigation and water problems. Take the case of Chattisgarh, people are unable to run their tubewells in absence of regular power supply though the Chief Minister had claimed that his State has surplus power supply. There are several villages without electricity who are forced to live in darkness. Most of the people say that interrupted power supply has rendered their tubewells useless.

[Translation]

Besides, the crop is perishing. Who is responsible for it? I am also of the view that leave alone permanent connection, not even an ordinary connection has been provided to thousands of pumps. The farmers there are a harried lot.

[Shri P.R. Khunte]

I would like to submit in this House that enough politics has been played in the name of farmers. Such 12 States are facing the drought situation. The weather is totally unpredictable. If this thing is not taken seriously entire country would be in turmoil. Farmer would have nowhere to go. People have started to migrate in large number from Chhatisgarh.

I would also like to say that as per the Government laws the relief work has been to ceased in all the States after 15th June. I would submit that the drought relief work be restarted in those States where it has been stopped since 15th June so that the landless and poor labourers may get food.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am speaking for the first time in your presence and I am speaking one very serious subject. You give one time to speak for one more minute. I don't want to waste the time of the House. I would like to submit that in Chattisgarh. ...*(Interruptions)* that the labourers have not been paid their wages by the Government of Chattisgarh for the services being rendered by them in various development construction works. On one hand the work in fields is not available and on the other workers also do not prefer working in fields. The problem of earning their livelihood is looming large on their faces. The people who worked have been given coupons but have not been paid their wages. I would submit to the Government to give directions to the State Government for immediately making payment of their wages.

I would like to make one more submission that I hail from Sarangrah parliamentary constituency through which all the main rivers of Chattisgarh like Mahanadi, Hasdo river, Kelo river, Mand river, Joke river, Sone river, Arpa river, Peri river etc. flow but it is the most drought prone area. Several irrigation projects have been lying pending there for the last 22, 28 to 32 years. All those projects be completed within time and the farmer's fields be provided water. The Union Government have provided Rs. 272 crore for Hansdeo Irrigation Project to be completed by 2003 but the Chief Minister of Chattisgarh has indulged in large scale corruption in this. As per my information in Chattisgarh. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Now you conclude.

SHRI P.R. KHUNTE: There are talks of Rs. 100 crore scam in it and it would severely impinge on the sights of the farmers. I request you to conduct a high level probe into it.

Many-many thanks for giving me an opportunity to speak on this occasion.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want your ruling within a minute or half. We would like to thank you for giving the MP's an opportunity to speak on this subject of floods and droughts. I would request that the Members who have not got opportunity to speak be given permission to submit their speeches by tomorrow afternoon.

MR. SPEAKER: I would like to finish this discussion today, tomorrow only the speech by the hon. Minister would take place.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: The hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs had said this. We would be obliged if you permit the laying down of the written speeches of those Members who were benefit of the opportunity to speak today.

MR. SPEAKER: Only one or two Members could be allowed to speak not many of them would be given time.

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: His request is to give permission for the submission of written speeches tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Members willing to submit their written speeches can do so tomorrow.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: I would speak tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Not tomorrow, I would call your name after him. Your name is next in the list after him.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: I will speak tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Written speeches would have to be delivered tomorrow.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Give only five minutes.

MR. SPEAKER: No, speak today. Everybody want to hear your speech.

[English]

Shri Bijoy Handique to speak now.

SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE (Jorhat): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think that within the strictly rationed time, it is not possible to make a coherent speech. Yet, I make a few points drawing the attention of the government so that they can take pointed action. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please keep silence in the House.

SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE: Sir, in Assam the first wave of flood hit the State in late June and has gone well into July. As a matter of fact, the State still reels under flood. The toll the first wave is staggering—13 districts are affected. They are Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Tinsukia, Jorhat, Sibsagar, Morigaon, Darrang, Sonitpur, Nalbari, Bhorpeta, Dhubri, Goalpara and Kamrup. The number of villages affected is 457 submerging 57,162 hectares of land with 50 per cent of the land under crop; and the number of people affected is about 4,59,079. The biggest below is the washing away of a strategic railway bridge in Dhemaji district cutting off the district from the rest of the country. Road communications including National Highway No. 52 in the district are also disrupted. This district is again hit during the last three days causing more depredations and washing away of long stretches of embankment.

Sir, a few other districts have been affected recently, in the last three to four days. The National Highway Nos. 31 and 37, the lifeline linking Assam to the rest of the country, are under water at a few points in Nalbari, Dhubri and Goalpara districts. The indications are very clear that the second wave of flood has already arrived.

This is the damage tally in the first wave of flood. What worries us is the pattern and intensity of the flood and going by the past experience this is going to stay and will further deteriorate with more waves coming. A State like Assam, weighed down by resource crunch over the years, is hardly in a position to afford to handle the overall situation all on its own. Besides relief and rehabilitation in all flood situations, it is vitally essential to take up some emergency protective work to minimise the devastation before the next waves of flood hit the State.

It is even necessary to repair the damaged infrastructure between two waves. It is really an intriguing situation. For on-going protective projects funds released by the Ministry of Water Resources are only in trickle. As a result, the projects remain incomplete when the flood season arrives and the State faces fresh attack. Unless these damages are repaired and embankments strengthened, they fail to bear the brunt of more on-rushes in between the waves.

Sir, the only source of fund available at this juncture is the one sanctioned by the Ministry of Agriculture from Calamity Relief Fund. This was the convention till 2000-2001. Due to inadequacy of funds for repair works, Departments like Public Works, Public Health Engineering, which used to get funds from the Revenue Department of CRF for repairing flood damaged infrastructure, are not able to carry out repairs.

The Central Government, in the mean time, in the Ministry of Agriculture by a Circular issued in September, 2001, taking cue from the recommendations of Eleventh Finance Commission, have rejected the proposal to meet expenditure on restoration and reconstruction from Calamity Relief Fund. This is a major departure from the earlier system of utilising CRF for restoration of damaged infrastructure and public assets to pre-calamity level. There is however, a point which I want to place before the hon. Minister—of course, the Agriculture Minister is not here—a point on which the decision can be revised. The Central Government has reportedly emphasised that the scope of utilising Calamity Relief Fund is confined to repair and restoration of immediate nature. If so, this expression 'of immediate nature' can cover emergency protective measures that particularly need to be taken in the time between waves of flood from funds sanctioned for relief and rehabilitation work. Even recent Conference of the Relief Commissioners held in New Delhi two month ago reiterated that the money for relief and rehabilitation cannot be utilised for other than relief work. This is an unrealistic approach, interpreting the recommendations of Eleventh Finance Commission in a perfunctory and casual manner. To earmark some amount for most urgent protective work out of Centrally sancitoned fund for relief and rehabilitation in no way violates recommendations of the Eleventh Finance Commission. It should be rather borne in mind that more devastation means more and more expenditure on relief and rehabilitation. So, instead if some allocations are directed to some essential protective measures, there will be less devastation and to that extent, the expenditure will be minimised. I am not pleading for dodging the recommendations of the Eleventh Finance Commission, but what I emphasise is a meaningful and more pragmatic interpretation of the recommendations of Eleventh Finance Commission.

I conclude by referring to an important point. Sir, the traditional drought area of a State does not remain the same. It has been expanding with the years. Though Assam is not a drought-prone area, we must not lose sight of the fact that over the years, some areas have been growing and expanding significantly as drought prone. Sir, at this rate, it will not be long before a drought zone emerges in Assam too. I urge the Ministry of Agriculture to identify these areas in different States and advise the State Governments to take measures right

[Shri Bijoy Handique]

now to arrest the advance of drought conditions. Sir, it is a sort of slow desertification. One of the causes is that sand-casting occurs particularly when river banks are breached and flows into immediate neighbouring paddy fields around it.

Sir, it is, however, mostly the weather factor and failure of vegetation that causes the drought condition. In this sense I do appreciate that the debate on flood and drought—the twin challenges to the farmers—is taken up together. All said and done, it is also true that unless the Government of India provides adequate funds for all the ongoing projects, it is not possible to contain and control floods in States like Assam. These proposed projects only can give long term solution.

Some of the projects that we have been hearing now soon will pass into legends. People of North-Eastern Region will talk about them as stories. They have already started telling them as stories. I hope, the Government will take immediate measures for releasing adequate funds for the on-going projects. So far as the Eleventh Finance Commission recommendations are concerned, I am not pleading for dodging the recommendations, but my emphasis is on one particular point that there should be more meaningful and more pragmatic interpretation of these recommendations.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN (Coochbehar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

India is a vast country, and 14 States are suffering from drought. At the same time, three States—West Bengal, Bihar and Assam—are also suffering from floods. Floods have caused so much havoc that many people died. I would like to confine myself to he flood situation in the North Bengal area. As you know, North Bengal comprises of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Coochbehar and other districts. In the last 15 days, incessant rains were there and, naturally, they resulted in heavy floods. The river was in a spate, and you will be astonished to learn that three people lost their lives in my constituency, Coochbehar. One rescue motor-boat with 12 people lost its control in the midst of heavy currents of the river *Kalyani* and must have been carried away to Bangladesh. We do not know the whereabouts of them and we do not know whether they are alive or not. Let us all hope that they will be alive when the boat reaches Bangladesh. That is the position. You will be astonished to learn that in that area, nearly two lakh people have become homeless and people have lost hundreds of cattle. As has already been mentioned by Comrades Minati Sen and Joachim Baxla, the national highway and the bridges on the river have been damaged. It is still raining in the morning today. I had a telephonic talk and I was told that there was a heavy rainfall this morning. I do not know what will be happening tomorrow.

Sir, at this juncture, the estimated loss may be more than three hundred crore rupees, I do not know. Where is the Agriculture Minister, Shri Ajit Singh? He has called a meeting of the representatives of 11 States and not 12 because just now, the Members from Orissa said that they have not been called. The representatives of 11 States have been called and I thank you for that. However, there are also those States where the floods are devastating and they are causing havoc. People have lost their lives and also their cattle. Many houses, including double-stories and multistoried houses, have been washed away. This being the position, I would like to know from the hon. Minister of Agriculture whether he has called a meeting of the representatives of these three States. Has he sent any Central team to that part of the country?

It has not been done. Have the Central Government provided any funds to that region? The Government of West Bengal with their limited resources is trying their best to carry on with the relief and rehabilitation programmes. We expected much more from the Central Government but it is a matter of regret that they did not respond to our request.

Sir, it has been our long-standing demand, the hon. Minister for Water Resources is here, that if the Government is serious about controlling floods in North Bengal and in North Bihar, then an Indo-Bhutan Joint River Commission, for controlling floods in North Bengal, and an Indo-Nepal Joint River Commission, for controlling floods in North Bihar, are a must. We had approached not only the present Minister for Water Resources but also his predecessor about this. I would like to recall on this occasion that even in the year 1969 when North Bengal was reeling under severe flood conditions and around five thousand people were killed, I led a delegation to the then Prime Minister, the late Indira Gandhi and the then Irrigation Minister, Shri K.L. Rao. They assured me that having a River Commission with Bhutan was the only way for controlling floods in the region. If that be so, then could the Government take up the issue with Bhutan? Bhutan is a separate country and it has its own geographical location. They are extracting dolomite for their cement factories and also are collecting stone chips

and exporting them to Bangladesh. Deforestation is going on unabated.

Sir, I would like to invite your goodself to visit this region. If you come there, then you would find that most of the houses in and around the rivers there have sunk into the riverbeds. The North Eastern is the connecting link and one cannot afford to avoid this region. My friends from the State of Assam are here. Can they afford to avoid this link? Geographical location of the region would suggest that this part could be used as a corridor. If this is the position, then I would like to request the hon. Minister, we have good relations with Bhutan, to take up the issue of having a Joint River Commission with the Government of Bhutan for controlling floods in North Bengal. Similarly, he should take up the issue with the Government of Nepal for controlling floods in North Bihar.

Sir, in conclusion I would like to make a few suggestions for control of both floods and drought. The first thing that should be done is that the agricultural loans should be waived. Secondly, food for work programmes should be started immediately to save the poor workers. Thirdly, for the flood prone areas, seedlings should be made available. It is because seedlings would be required for sowing after the water levels recedes. With these few words, I conclude my speech.

SHRIMATI RANEE NARAH (Lakhimpur): Sir, I wish to lay my speech on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Sir. Jaswant Singh Yadav, Shrimati Ranee Narah moved to take her speech before you start your speech.

[English]

*SHRIMATI RANEE NARAH (Lakhimpur): Honourable Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw kind attention of concerned Minister through you over the situation of flood in my Parliamentary constituency, Lakhimpur, Assam. The two Districts, Lakhimpur, Dhemaji and Majuli Sub-Division (district Jorhat) of my constituency are affected very badly by flood.

Around four lakh people of these two Districts have been affected. Four hundred and thirty six (436) villages of Dhemaji District is completely submerged in flood and three lakh people have been affected in this District. 24,046.00 hectares crop of the District is completely damaged. National Highway-52, the only connection to Dhemaji is also washed away in flood and Samarjan wooden bridge No. 400 A(1) and Samarjan Railway bridge has also been completely washed away. There is no connection by road or train to Dhemaji District by rest of the country, the people of this district is in very horrible condition. The Kareng Chapari Dyke of Dhemaji is also completely washed away in flood.

In Lakhimpur, there is around one lakh people who have been affected by flood. 140 villages of Lakhimpur is completely submerged in flood and 29,034.00 hectares crop has been damaged. Two neighbouring LACs, i.e. Nowbaicha, Dakuakhana are also affected by in this flood. In Dakuakhana and Nowbaicha around 80 village have submerged in flood and the boat is the only way of communication in these two LACs. The Matmara Dyke near Bakulguri Tekelifuta in Dakuakhana Sub-Division is also washed away in flood.

If the Lilabari Airport of Lakhimpur District, where all technical facilities are available is started shortly, it can be of great help for the people of Lakhimpur, Dhemaji and Arunachal Pradesh also, for delivery of relief materials to these Districts.

The world famous river island Majuli sub-division of Jorhat District is completely submerged in flood and there is no way of communication. The only way of boat/ferry is also stopped due to heavy flood. No option is there help the flood affected people.

I would like to request the concerned Minister to take necessary and immediate action to provide help by coins and care to these two District Dhemaji and Lakhimpur and Majuli Sub-Division of my Parliamentary constituency.

[Translation]

DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV (Alwar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. I am not in a habit to speak only for the sake of speaking alone and to get my speech recorded. The condition of the people in the State from which I hail is so pathetic that it may cause others to shed tears in sympathy. Every person has a right to live in the country in all circumstances and it is the duty of the State Government as well as Union Government to meet the basic need of the people.

*Speech was laid on the Table of the House.

[Dr. Jaswant Singh Yadav]

Sir, Rajasthan has been facing drought for the last four years due to which the people have left their cattle including severed cow at the mercy of fate and in the vain hope that those may find some fodder to feed themselves somewhere else. Similarly old persons are also in a pathetic condition and their agony and pain is enough to cause one cry. Today those persons do not have money for medication. The discussion in the House to combat with the situation has taken place are the hon. Members have presented figures in this regard. Every Member has highlighted the problem being faced by his own state and the country at large but discussion alone won't resolve the problem, infact we are trying to find fault with either the State Governments or Union Government. The Prime Minister has for the first time started a scheme to connect villages to the cities through roads. Everybody wants that the development of the villages take place but none of them would have imagined that there villages could be connected by road. Besides, farmers were also given the facility of credit cards and now they can purchase with dignity. A lot of discussion on the crop insurance scheme has taken place and the hon. Minister himself discussed it in detail but I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what is the fault of the people of Rajasthan that they are still devoid of these facilities. The Government of Rajasthan do not even provide 50 percent matching grants and the farmer is suffering. The Crop Insurance Policy is in vogue in the entire country including Gujarat but not in Rajasthan. The Members of Rajasthan who are present in the House would speak on this subject. However it is unfortunate that the Rajasthan Government, in an effort to save 50 percent of its funds, has left the farmers in lurch. I have collected the figures of the last four years. As per these figures, the Rajasthan Government received Rs. 1900 crore from the Government of India but the people of Rajasthan are craving for even too little. The parents are facing problem as to how to bring up their children and how to manage their livelihood? The Government of Rajasthan has not been able to spend Rs. 1900 crore so far.

COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY (Barmer): These figures are wrong ....*(Interruptions)*

DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: Let him provide exact figure. I will accept his version ...*(Interruptions)*. I am not politicising it ...*(Interruptions)*

COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY : At present, I do not have figures. I will provide tomorrow ...*(Interruptions)*

DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: Whether Crop Insurance Scheme is being implemented in Rajasthan? I would like to know whether the Union Government are discussing to implement Crop Insurance Scheme? ...*(Interruptions)*

COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY: It is already in many states and several states are not implementing it ...*(Interruptions)*

DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: We are discussing Rajasthan. Are you not disturbed over the benefits not accruing to the people of Rajasthan under this scheme? What can a farmers do? 60 per cent of the Members of Lok Sabha represent farmers' community. Everybody sought vote on farmers' card and is playing politics now. It is not a question of BJP or Congress. I discussed this matter with the Minister of Agriculture. Hon. Minister of Agriculture is present in the House. I asked him that he has made announcement regarding relief for U.P. and Orissa but no announcement has been made in regard to Rajasthan. He expressed his inability. He said that what he could do? Until and unless the Government of Rajasthan send us demand for drought relief after declaring the State as drought affected, how can the Government make any announcement. It is unfortunate that the farmers and others in Rajasthan are dying and we are plying politics. The Government of Rajasthan has not even initiated anything in this regard, then how will it be able to send the report? When the farmers and poor labourers will avail its benefits? Will they send the report after monsoon is over and Rajasthan has suffered a lot. People have started migrating from there. It is unfortunate that Rajasthan is facing total drought, the crops have been destroyed and the Government are paying no heed to it. If you look at aged parents, tears will roll down from you eyes. People are penniless. People sell their ornaments for getting their ailing children treated. But when their old aged parents fall sick they are forced to think whether to get them treated or go for earning their bread and finally they are forced to leave their ailing parents behind. We will have to rise above politics and find a solution to it. You are talking about the Government of Rajasthan. I am not producing wrong figure. Rajasthan is reeling under famine like situation. There is hue and cry everywhere. Which way the farmers harmed the Government that they are not getting power supply. I

would like to thank the Minister of Agriculture for the announcements he has made. He took the initiative and convened meeting of 12 States. But he announcements are not adequate. He is talking of waiving off loans taken by the farmers. There are so many mega rich persons sitting silent with loans of Rs. 55 thousand crore of NPA, they face no calamity and the Government writes off their loans. When poor people face national calamity the Government provide them no proper help. The Government grant Rs. 5 lakh as compensation to a plane-crash victim. The people are facing total drought and the Government talk of providing Rs. 2500 per acre as compensation. My soul is weeping today. Will Rs. 2500 be enough for them? The Government will provide grain to the poor people and paying paltry sum to middle level farmers who have taken loans for purchasing tractor on or boring tube-well is unjustified. He is not going to get anything except death. He should get subsidy, free power supply and such a scheme should be formulated whereby he can avail benefits. The experts all over the world say that the future will see grave water crisis. There is a limit for atrocity. My district Alwar has been declared a dark zone and farmers over there neither get loan for tubewell nor they get power connection. but, if any industrialist wants to set up an Industry, be it distillery or Bislery factory he gets every facility including power connection and grants. Why so much injustice is done to the farmers? Since my district has been declared dark zone, the district should get every facility. Small farmers in my area have only 1-2 beegha land and they have no other source of income and their children are unemployed. The Government cannot provide them electricity as the area has been declared dark zone. The farmers cannot irrigate their fields nor they can bore tubewells. Industrialists bore tube-wells for industrial purpose in this area and get power connection too. Under such circumstances, the poor man repents and says the people whom we have sent to State Legislators and to the Parliament have done nothing for us. They are same people who cast as high as 70 per cent votes. People sending their representatives to the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha face atrocities. When the issue of providing facilities to them is taken up, we merely finish up politicising.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, my submission is that whatever decision the Government of India want to take, it should take collectively. The State Governments also put blame on the Union Government that is is not providing them financial assistance whereas the fact is that most of the States do not utilise the funds allotted to them. The game of politics is going on and the farmers is dying. The State did a wrong once, now it is not going to repeat it. At least it should stay above politics and work for the people. How hon. Minister of Agricutlure announced a relief package of Rs. 2500 per hectare? Is this much amount adequate for their livelihood? What is the harm in waiving off loans of small farmers when the Government have waived off loans worth crores of rupees of leading industrialists? Rajasthan has been facing drought for the last four years. How the farmers will be able to feed their children within so meagre amount? Therefore, my submission is that the Government should waive off loans of the farmers and not the interest on their loans. Today, the way road network is being expanded and information technology is advancing a time will come when the children of farmers will switch over to terrorism as they will have no means of livelihood. As he is aware, drinking water will be a great problem in the coming years. Therefore, through you, I urge the Government to formulate long term plans and provide canals in every areas so that development of India could take place.

COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY (Barmer): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am thankful to you for holding discussion on drought and flood.

Today entire India especially Northern India is under the clutches of famine. This has worsened the condition of farmers. If you look at the figures of last 3-4 years, you would find that it is the farmers in agricultural sector who have given maximum contribution in improving the economic condition of the country. Due to the Export-Import policy in the last 3-4 years, farmers are not getting the minimum support price of their produce. Country is facing consequent famines and condition of farmers is pitiable. Now it is for us to make deliberations on this aspect.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Kharif Crop has been ruined in Rajasthan due to drought. Cultivation of Baljra is more in Rajasthan. And even if we have rainfall now, still Bajra cannot be grown. Besides Gawar, Moong etc. can be grown. I mean to say that farmers are really suffering a lot. Rajasthan has also been included amongst the States which are under the clutches of drought. Rajasthan is experiencing continuous drought for the last five years. 31 out of 32 districts in Rajsthan were experiencing famine during the year 2001. 30 thousand out 35,000 villages in Rajasthan were under famine. 2900 villages out of 3 thousands villages of my constituency had experienced famine. Figures of last year show that more than 50

[Col. (Retd.) Sona Ram Choudhary]

percent crop in 18 districts out of 32 districts got ruined. Cultivation of Bajra was quite good last year but the Government declared its minimum support price very late. And so the middlemen purchased it at throwaway prices, which resulted in a big loss to the farmers.

DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: The State Government could have purchased it. They could have requested the Central Government. It should have been done by the Government of your party. ...*(Interruptions)*

COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY: They can only take after fixing the support price, but they delayed. Bajra arrives in the market in May-June. You had fixed support price in September, 2001. You know everything in this regard. This lead to a loss of around rupees four hundred crore to farmers in Rajasthan. I had visited my constituency recently on 20th and 21st of July. The condition prevailing there is really pitiable. Water and fodder is hardly available there. Some projects should be made there. All sources of water have dried there and the underground water level has descended to 10 to 30 feet below. The situation is that all schemes initiated for water have failed. People are bringing water from a distance of 30 to 35 kilometers. People have left many villages. There is no labour, they also have fled. I beg your pardon, my district—Barmer is just adjoining to the State of Gujarat ...*(Interruptions)*

DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: Rajasthan Government was getting wheat from the Centre, but they could not procure it. They could have got wheat free of cost. But the Government even could not do that. They could get eight lakh tonnes of wheat. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister would give reply.

COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY: Sir, they are disturbing me. I would ask for time separately from you.. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI (Rewa): Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is no way. He is unnecessary interrupting in between. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You have delivered your speech. Please let others speak now.

SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI: There is no such State which procured wheat early. He is wasting time of others. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Jaswant Singh ji, I request you that it is too late now.

SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI: Sir, whether the chair has allowed him to make objection.

COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY: The hon. Minister of Agriculture is new ...*(Interruptions)*. I was saying that labour is fleeing from there and ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN (Araria): Many States are not ready to procure wheat, they want funds ...*(Interruptions)*

COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY: They want to procure wheat but then why rotten wheat is supplied which is discarded even by animals. Who would like to take such wheat. I was saying that many people from my State used to visit Gujarat but by the grace of Narendra Modi ji, all industries got closed there. People used to come from Punjab and Haryana but the situation prevailing there is also bad. Livestock is very much effected there. 20 lakh out of 28 lakh people in my area are affected. We have a livestock of 50 lakh. My district has massive livestock. But we have suffered a great loss of livestock. 3.4 crores of population out of 5.4 crores has been affected in Rajasthan. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru started Indira Gandhi Canal in 1952 in order to solve the problem of water. It has reached upto Jaisalmer and Barmer. Funds were given by the Central Government for national project during the last two years, but this too has been discontinued. I had raised this matter but Sethi ji told us that they do not have funds so they have discontinued it. Similarly the work on Sardar Sarovar Project is going on a very slow pace. I mean to say that the Government should give more funds for long term plans asl also for resolving the problem of water.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to make some demands from the Central Government. My first demand is that famine may be declared as soon as possible. So far as our Chief Minister is concerned, I will also pressurize him. He has come today. Moreover, the Goverment waives off the loans of big industrial houses, they may kindly do so with the farmers also and their interest may also be reduced. Just now my colleague was saying that the Government may constitute some Parliamentary teams or teams of officers, so that they can make on the Spot assessment place. By saying that Rajasthan, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh should get this much amount cannot

solve everything there. If tomorrow they say that they are giving rupees 7,000 crore, then the Government should receive feedback as to under what heads should the mony be spent.

Moreover the help given by the Government viz., we asked for rupees 460 crore in 1998-99, but were given rupees 33 crore. In 1999-2000, we asked for rupees 960 crore, but were given rupees 130 crore. And last year we asked for rupees 1140 crore, but were given just rupees 152 crore. What I mean to say is that no politics should be played in this. Funds should be given keeping in mind the prevailing conditions.

A lot has been said about food for work scheme. People get rotten foodgrain still they are working because they do not get bread. Moreover I wish to submit that water should be sent through train in drought affected areas. Since the last two years water is being transported through train, so this year also it should be done. Lakhs of army men are deployed in my areas Jaisalmer and Barmer. The stretch of border area in my constituency is 850 kilometres. People there given less water to their animals and more to the army men. Last year we were provided water through train facility so this may kindly be done this year also.

Sir, today the water level is going down. Wells have dried up. So kindly send machineries and rings of the Central Ground Water Boards so that dried plants could also get water.

There are many schemes initiated in desert area viz., Desert Development programme and desert prone areas programme. The Government provides fund for them. I request that this funding may be properly done keeping in view the conditions of these areas. The Centre provides assistance for certain schemes while for certain other schemes contribution is made by the Rajasthan Government. Their conditon is very deplorable. You must provide more assistance to the Rajasthan Government.

Sir, my submission is that the Centre should provide a special package to Rajasthan. You must provide a special package on the lines of package provided for hilly areas because the situation here is very bad. I remember a question asked by me in Lok Sabha on 30th June, 1998 which was replied by the hon. Prime Minister. He had given an assurance and I am reading out the same:-

> "Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Member has raised the question about that region of Rajasthan which is most neglected one and is a desert area. I agree with him that we have to formulate special schemes for such areas. These schemes do not exist for the desert areas. This suggestion is quite good. It would certainly be taken into consideration and action be taken thereon".

I am of the view that the hon. Minister of Finance is also from same area from where I hail. I have wirtten to him as well. I have told him that if a package is given, it would be credited to his account. Hon. Minister of Agriculture is sitting here, you are his colleague you tell him that the hon. Prime Minister had also assured—I shall be grateful to you if you convey this to him.

Lastly, I conclude by thanking you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH (Satna): Mr. Speaker, Sir a big problem has emerged before the country owing to the failure of the monsoon. It is a countrywide problem. 12 States of the country have been reeling under drought as per the information given to the hon. Minister of Agriculture himself. Madhya Pradesh is faced with famine instead of drought since for the last three years, Madhya Pradesh has been facing the scourge of drought. This year the rainfall took place in only 5 of the 45 districts in States. Only the paddy and soyabean crops had been sown by the farmers after some rain falll occurred in the month of June but whatever little germination had taken place, was scorched by the severe heat. Even if it now, it would not serve any purpose because the sowing reason of paddy and soyabean crops in this region dominated by there two crops has elapsed because the plantation time for paddy is between 15th June to 15th July and the paddy is sown before 5th July. The geographical conditions in Madhya pradesh are different. The regions of Central India, Mahakaushal and Vindhya have different geographical and climatic conditions. The irrigated land in the entire country is 36 percent and this figure is 18 percent i.e. half of the national average in respect of Madhya Pradesh. In Vindhya region comprising of Satana, Rewa, Sidhi, Sehdol. Panya and Chattirpur etc. the average irrigated land is only two and a half percent. The Banasagar dam to be constructed there and for which the foundation stone was laid by Shri Morarji Bhai Desai in 1978 remains to constructed despite the passage of 24 years. Cnaals are not being dug for want of funds. That is the joint irrigation project of all three

[Shri Ramanand Singh]

States. The right side canal of the Bargi dam on Narmada which was to pass through Vindhya region has still been lying pending for the last 22 years for want of funds.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government of India passed and enacted the Central Forest Act, 1980 as a result of which 14 irrigation projects in my district Satana on which crores of rupees have so far been spent by the Madhya Pradesh Government have been lying pending. Only headworks have to be constructed. That work has been pending. Today, Union Minister of Forests and Environment is not present here. Hence, in the morning when the debate had started, I had said that not only the Agriculture Minister but all including the Irrigation Minister, Power Minister, Minister of Food and Civil supplies etc. should be present in the House. Sir, over 300 irrigation projects of Madhya Pradesh have been pending with the Ministry of Environment and Forests. Mr. Balu is really like 'Balu' (Sand) for he is not listening to any views however hard I may try. The situation in Madhya Pradesh is quite terrible. In its report submitted by it to the Centre, the Government of Madhya Pradesh had mentioned that all the contingency plans formulated before the rainy season have proved inadequate. This report has been submitted by the Chief Minister, Shri Digvijay Singh. It proves that all the schemes formulated in the part have proved a failure.

Sir, it is true that though the Union Government formulates and implements majority of the rural development schemes, these are not implemented properly. If these are implemented properly poors can get a lot of relief. However, unfortunately, the State Government take all these grants and funds provided by the Centre as an alms and even the pension meant for the destitutes, old aged and handicapped is not paid for six months at trot in Madhya Pradesh which is giving rise to starvation and of starvation deaths have become a regular feature. These are terrible times.

Mr. Speakr, Sir, thousands of people collect fire wood from the forests and sell it in Satna to earn bread. The marginal and the landless farmers are the worst hit by the drought but it is really sad that no Member in the House made any mention of them. Landless farmers comprise a big section. 60 percent of our population depends on agriculture to earn their livelihood. Landless farmers undertake weeding, tilling and embankment works in fields. Today, they have been rendered jobless as the rain has not taken place and the pitch dark future is lying ahead of them and it is the reason why I am sad.

Sir, these are the people having royal or feudal lineage are the part of various State Governments who have no concern for the poors. One such feudal lord is the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. Their only concern is to have maximum grants from the Centre and to use it to serve his own purpose. An amount of approximately Rs. 800 crore has been allocated to Madhya Pradesh under the Pradhanmantri Gram Sadak Yojana out of which 600 crore rupees have been pocketed by the Chief Minister and his ruling party and only 200 crore rupees have been spent. I am very sorry for it. I did not want to raise it today ...*[Interruptions]*

SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Member has levelled allegation against the Chief Minister and it is not right. I would like to ask him whether did he ever ask the Chief Minister to hold a probe into any affair? If not, why did not he do so?

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to ask Shri Sunder Lal Tiwariji to resume his seat. He is my nephew by relation. I would like to tell him that I wrote several letters to the hon. Chief Minister but unfortunately he does not even reply to the letters written by the Parliamentarians. It is not my subject. Therefore, I don not want to discuss it.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government of India have set up National Calamity Relief Fund which has funds of Rs. 11007.59 crore. The Government have funds under National Calamity Exigencies Funds Scheme. Fortunately, Shri Ajit Singh is the Agricultural Minister of this country. He took initiatives for tackling the drought situation and called the meeting of Agriculture Scientists, people of Indian Council for Agriculture Research and Metrological Department. We cannot blame Metrological Department and the Minister of Agriculture. There could be rainfall in Bhopal, it is cloudy in Chandigarh, there could be rain in Kerala and elsewhere. This year, a lot of predictions regarding rain were made on TV. "Ghaag" and "Bhadduri" community of our region used to make prediction regarding rain which was based scientific facts. They used to say that

"Kalsa Pani Garam Hain, Chidya Nahave dhool.
Chinti le anda chali, ho varsha bharpoor".

It was based on scientific approach when ants carry their eggs, it rains. They used to say that when water in pot becomes hot it rains, when birds throws dust on themselves it rains. Today, the Metrological Department

is having super computer which predicts, there could be rain, but it does not rain. I respect hon'ble Ajit Singhji, you are a son of farmer. You have taken initiative as a farmer leader. I appreciate you. I have congratulated you through letter for expressing concern of drought as Agriculture Minister. You called the meeting of Agriculture Ministers, Meteorological department and agriculture scientists. I hope something will come out of this. I cannot remember any such Agriculture Minister in India like Shri Ajit Singh, who had announced the States should declared drought first in their State and then approach the Centre for help. Unfortunately, the entire Madhya Pradesh is affected by the drought. Shri Sundar Lal Tiwariji is trying to defend the Chief Minister. He has declared drought in only five districts. Whether Reeva and Satna are not affected by the drought? You should tell about the present situation of the State. You are my nephew, therefore, please sit down.

There is a grave drinking water problem in Madhya Pradesh ...*(Interruptions)*. You too will get the chance. No part of the country is facing so much drinking water crisis. The water flows down to other States. Water level is also going down over there. When I was Minister in Janta Party regime, I had run many water supply schemes for the villages of State. We have provided taps to the 350 villages. Today, those schemes are not being implemented. All schemes have been ruined. All handpumps have gone dry. All schemes which are being run. should be integrated and the Government of India should take this calamity as challenge and should consider it as a national calamity. If we want we can turn this opportunity into a golden opportunity. We can spend the funds of all these schemes in making ponds, canals and to construct grid by linking rivers. I am not criticising but had the grid on rivers Ganga and Cauvery would have been constructed 50 years ago, then we would not have faced this problem. We have to formulate two kinds of schemes. One is emergent scheme to provide immediate relief like 'food for work', cheap food grain, all rural scheme like Annopporna Yojna and JRY, should be integraged and implemented to provide work to the people. The scarcity manual will not help. Hon'ble Minister, you should not only take the opinion of the states, but should also declare drought. The Monsoon has failed, now whose advice are you asking. The Government of India should announce and take initiative in direction of providing relief to the drought affected States. The responsibility for it should be fixed on State Ministers. Hon'ble Shivraj Singhji has said in the beginning that before the entire systems go away, we should and people start taking it on a dole we should cooperate in construction and formulation of a plan to link the rivers. We should try that there should be a reservoir in every village and every village should have drinking water source.

21.00 hrs.

Every unemployed should get employment, and every worker should get food for work. I would also say that every sick man should get food. I would like to say that, the British Government had made a provision of scarcity manual in 1936 and Famine Code was also laid by the Britishers. It is very unfortunate for the country that in last fifty years no amendments have been made in Drought Manual and Famine Manual. Please make amendments in it. Shri Ajit Singhji, since you are the Agricultural Minister, I request you to kindly bring necessary amendments in the manual of Famine and Drought Code so that the sentiments and feelings of the independent India could be honoured. Are you going to provide employment and food to sick and helpless people? Today, the country is having enough foodgrains in its storage. If Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee will start distributing foodgrains free of cost, nobody will die of hunger. At the time of famine in bengal, Shri Kedarnath Agarwal had written a peom-

"Baap beta bechta hain
bhookh se behaal hoker
dharam, dheeraj, pran khoker
ho rahi anreet barber
rashtra sara dekhta hai
baap beta bechta hain."

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru visited Bengal, when lakhs of people over there were dying due to starvation and he asked them that why you people are dying due to hunger, why not you loot the Government godowns. I am not saying this, because I am from BJP, but I am an old socialist. Many a times I have been arrested for encouraging the people to loot the godowns. The BJP is in power at Centre. If food will not be distributed to the poor, I, Ramanand Singh, despite being MP of BJP will ask the people to loot the Government godowns. Therefore, please make announcement to make foodgrains available at lower rates to the people in villages, so that not even a single man should die of hunger.

Shri Ajit Singhji, you are holding portfolio of Agriculture Minister in the leadership of senior leader like Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. You are the son of farmer. Since you are Agriculture Minister, crores of farmers and poor people of the country would get benefit of schemes like Drought-Code, Calamity Relief Fund and National Calamity Contingency Fund and Government of India should accept it as challenge to convert this natural calamity into building the new India, to root out corruption,

[Shri Ramanand Singh]

to carry out proper monitoring, we accept this challenge, otherwise it is very difficult to fight the nature, but after all Government too have some power. It is not appropriate that people of the country having population of hundred crore die due to hunger, despite having wealthy of natural resources, rivers and forests ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Ramanandji, I have given you much time, you may please sit down.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: I would like to say that after making optimum use of all resources we should formulate schemes for future in order to provide relief to the people of this country so that famine should become blessing for us.

With these words. I thank you.

CHOWDHARY TALIB HUSSAIN (Jammu): Hon. Speaker, Sir,

"Hazaron Khawaishen Aisi ki har khwaish pe dam nikhle,
Bahut nikhle mere arman, lekin phir bhi kam nikhle"

When you callaed my name initially, I thought that I have got the permission to speak, thought it was nothing for which I would have felt sorry. A long debate has taken place here. Some Hon. Members even termed the drought as famine which in my opinion is far more an intense and out of proportion description. There is a great difference between drought and famine "Khuskal" is drought and presently our country is facing drought but God forbid, we are still to fall victim of famine. Many solutions can be found out for drought and it can successfully be fought with but if famine strikes, then there can be no way out except declaring emergency and taking desperate measures. Drought has various causes and the Members speaking prior to me, also touched upon various points which I do not want to repeat right now but at the same time, I would like to bring it to the notice of Hon. Shri Ajit Singh Sahib that though the causes of drought are global phenomena and it signifies some global warning but at the same time, there are various common factors which are responsible for covering either floods or drought in the country. The large scale deforestation which has taken place and the rate at which it is taking place in the country has been manifesting itself in either floods or droughts.

The Ministry of Agricutlure is a very important one but unless this Ministry work in tendem coordination and in cooperateion with other Ministries or departments, like Environment and Forests, Power and Irrigation and the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Heavy Industries etc. the problem of drought can not be resolved. Union Goverrnment's task force of the Ministry of Agriculture under one umbrella should be constituted which would cover the various schemes under various Ministries like the Environment and Forests, Power and Drinking Water Supply Schemes etc. and should work under one umbrella in such a manner so as to resolve this crisis like situation. I would like to submit to hon. Choudhary Ajit Singh Saheb who is a popular leader and also the leader of the farmers and also the son of a popular leader, that though fortunately we have still not been hit by famine but our country is facing the challenge of drought and unless it is addressed to systematically it would'nt get resolved.

In developed countries, there is such a system in vogue that the emergency of contingency plan measures automatically come in force in the hour of crisis but unfortunately in our country, we resort to finding solutions only when the emergency arises or in other words we try to dig well when it already catches fire. We should have a long term policy in which the causes for the drought in our country should be clearly spelt including the causes which at once strike the mind of a layman like the deforestation which is resulting in the decreased flow of water and increasing pollution and similar other causes. However, unless cases are identified, we would not be able to find its remedy. I would request the Hon. Minister to take all possible steps to address this problem including taking other Members into confidence and holding deliberation with the bureaucrats and the Chief Ministers, the Agriculture Minister of the State but I would pray to God that this situation proves temporary and do not intensify and you must take all the necessary possible steps. God forbids this drought like situation may's grow into famine like situation. Besides, care is also to be taken to identify the famine affected pockets in the country which are situated in between the large drought affected territory. However, this issue will have to be resolved by making the distribution system proper.

Hence, I would like to submit that though the Ministry of Agricutlure is important, unless you work in tendem and bring various departments under one umbrella, and constituted a task force, issue can not be resolved. Everybody is aware as to under which situation Jammu & Kashmir has been passing through. I would like to assure the Hon. Minister, Sir, that the people of Kashmir are patriots and intend to work for the unity and integrity of the country and are also doing so and there is no dearth of such persons. However, there are several

possible reasons for the situation prevailing there. Government is neglecting various sectors of Jammu & Kashmir. We demand have kept on for providing several packages and we would also like to demand that the horticulture and agriculture sector be given priority there. The Doda district in Jammu Division, Kandi areas in Udhampur or the upper sidges in the valley are drought affected areas. If more funds are not made available then these areas would be doomed and be ruined.

As far combating drought is concerned, irrigation has a big role to play in it. What would happen to the country of Iqbal when the rivers dry up due to monsoon failure here and it is in such a situation of failure of monsoon and lack of rain fall that the role of irrigation system assumes importance but one irrigation system is not working properly. Adequate funds are not being provided for the irrigation system and very inadequate funds have been made available in irrigation sector especially in our State Jammu and Kashmir. Such a crisis of failure of monsoon or rain is the nature's punishment to us due to our acts defying laws of nature like indulging in deforestation, causing pollution, changing in courses of rivers without any compulsion due to which distribution system is in jitters and godown are rotting. Looking at all this situation, the only conclusion at which we reach is that such a task force comprising all the concerned Ministries especially those of Ministry of Irrigation, Food and Public Distribution etc. be constitute so only then this problem of drought could be resolved.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ram Singh Kaswan lays his speech on the Table of the House.

*SHRI RAM SINGH KASWAN (Churu): Hon. Speaker, Sir, the country is facing severe drought for the first time in the last 15 years. Today, we are discussing this situation in this House. The crops at most of the places in the country have been ruined due to drought. Further, due to the monsoon failure, the farmer has suffered a lot and the problem of fodder and drinking water for the cattle has also arisen. Most of the water sources have dried up. The problem is even more grave in Rajasthan where the monsoon rain has not occurred in most of the districts. Leave alone sowing in most of the districts in Rajasthan, farmers have not even ploughed their fields. In some parts, premonsoon rain had occurred one month ago. The farmer had sown the costly seeds, but in the absence of rain later, that crop dried up in its infancy. Rajasthan has been facing severe drought for the last three years and as a result there has been severe water crisis also. Most of the livestock of the farmer have perished in the famine which has been occurring on for the last three years there and if the same situation persists, the remaining livestock would also be lost this year.

Rajasthan Government has completely failed to tackle the problem of famine during these three years. Neither the workers have got their wages, nor the cattle have got fodder, nor the public have got drinking water. The Government has proved quite inefficient on all the three fronts. The Union Government extended sufficient assistance to the State Government financially and also provided foodgrains, but the Government of Rajasthan failed to further extend this assistance to the farmers and the workers. Last year, only the millet crop was produced which the farmers had to sell at a price of Rs. 300 per quintal. The millet of the farmer could not be procured despite the Union Government making available money and the farmer is forced to purchase the same millet at the rate of Rs. 600 per quintal. Thus, the farmers are suffering both ways. Union Government had made arrangements for making available drinking water by train but the Rajasthan Government failed to reap full benefits of this arrangements and the water could not be utilized appropriately. In the matter of electricity, the farmer's condition is even more pitiable. The power tariff was hiked so much that farmer is finding it impossible to make payment of the electricity power bills at hiked rates.

The situation in my parliamentary constituency Churu is even grave. Most of the livestock have perished. Workers are not getting any work and the drinking water is not available to the people. Water was to be made available to the villages of Rajgarh tehsil of my district through Sidhmukh Canal Project but most of the villages connected to this scheme have been left out of this project. Further, the village after which this project was named Sidhmukh Canal Project is not getting any benefit from this project.

Besides, several villages of Rajgarh and Taranagar region were also to be connected by the Indira Gandhi Canal Project for the purpose of irrigation. The construction work of canal had also started in some villages of Taranagar but now it has stopped. The arrangement for irrigation should be made by immediately connecting the villages of Rajgarh and Taranagar tehsil to Churu district which are facing severe famine so that some relief could be got from the recurring famine. For

*Speech was Laid on the Table of the House.

[Shri Ram Singh Kaswan]

providing drinking water, the work on second phase of Apani Yojna should be immediately undertaken so that this problem could be resolved. Power should be made available to the farmers for 12 hours everyday so that more time could be available for irrigation and the farmers could get relief. The entire region should be declared drought affected by doing 'girdavari' so that the Union Government could provide assistance from National Calamity Relief Fund. The recovery of all the loans given by all the co-operative and Government banks be stopped and their interest be eaived off. Government of Rajasthan must be directed to formulate a contingency plan immediately. A team shouod be sent from the Centre to assess the situation and all possible assistance should be provided. If the said measures are not taken immediately then the situation can go out of control. The situation in Rajasthan is extremely grave.

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL (Kanpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on this important subject. Several hon. Members have expressed their views on the discussion regarding famine and flood situation which is continuing for approximately last eight hours. I would like to draw your kind attention to a few points only. The situation in Uttar Pradesh is such that the farmer faces drought and flood in every season. There is no one to procure paddy, if it is produced in larger quantity. During the last Kharif crops, Government announed the MSP for Kharif crop but 90 percent of the paddy crop had to be sold by the farmer to the middlemen and brokers instead of Government agencies. The reason for this is that though the Government has fixed the price of paddy at Rs. 5 per kg. farmer is compelled to sell it at a price of Rs. 3.5 to Rs. 4 per kilogram to the middlemen and brokers who in turn supply this to the Government agencies. The same story is repeated in the case of wheat and other rabi crops. No Government agency directly procures foodgrains from the farmers at the rate fixed by the Government. Farmers have to sell their foodgrain to the middlemen and brokers under compulsion who pocket 25 percent of the farmer's share in the process. It is not something to be laughed at. It has been seen in Uttar Pradesh that 80-90 percent of paddy and wheat is sold to Government agencies through middlemen and brokers. It is very unfortunate. It is the misfortune of several States in the country that they are facing severe drought this time. Weather forecasting about monsoon arrival being aired on T.V. and radio has proved false and I feel that the direction in which wind has been blowing also indicates that even if monsoon arrives in two to four days, it would not be of any use for the cultivation. The late arrival of monsoon may help raising the depleted ground water level a bit but so far as Kharif crop is concerned, it has completely been ruined. The pulses, including 'Arhar' which is sown in this month, are not likely to be sown at all and in such a situation, how the production can be expected?

The drought and floods have become a part of our destiny for long. Flood strikes every year affecting 25 to 35 percent area and drought has been affecting several States for the last many years. Unfortunately, 13 States have been affected by the drought this year. I would like to focus myself on U.P. only. Drought and flood occur due to natural reasons. Neither any political party nor any leader is responsible for it. If someone is blamed for drought and flood, then it will be a political issue and it has no importance. I would like to draw your attention towards U.P. during the last ten years? The Minister of Agricutlure is present here. He should ask the State Government of U.P. as to how many canals have been constructed during the last ten years? Alongwith this, I would also like to ask whether even a single unit of power generation has been set up there during the last 10 years, whether power generation has been increased? I would like to bring to your notice that more than half of the handpumps, installed in U.P. after independence, are not in working condition. MLAs and representatives have been raising their voice since long in this regard. They have been demanding that either reboring of these handpumps should be done or these should be replaced by new handpumps. But during the last 10 years neither any new handpumps has been installed nor any arrangement for power generation and power distribution has been made. Besieds, the Governemnt have also not paid any attention towards construction of canals.

Today we talk about globalisation and computerisation. We are applying scientific methods in almost every field. There is revloution in the field of communication. But have we formulated any long-term scheme to overcome the situation of drought and flood? Had we done so we would not have been in such a pathetic condition. In our State, only 40 percent of the lands is irrigated i.e. means of irrigation like handpumps and canals are available there. Rest of the 60% land is dependent on rain water for agriculture. If there is timely and average rainfall then the production is good and if there is no timely rainfall or there is heavy rainfall then

production decreases. Through you, I would like to urge the Union Government that in such a big country where climates vary, where season changes every month, unless and until any long term scheme is formulated to tackle the situation of drought and flood, we will have to face drought and flood every year and due to this farmers and labourers will continue to suffer loss.

Sir, I would like to tell one more thing. It has come to my knowledge that the godowns of Food Corporation of India contain 60 lakh tonnes of rotten wheat. Its reason is that the foodgrain has been kept in open as a result of which it gets rotten within a year or two. The officers of F.C.I. are planning to use this rotten wheat for drought relief programmes. We should pray to God that there should not be drought anywhere so that FCI officers do not get chance to distribute rotten wheat to the farmers under various schemes. The minister of food and civil supplies is present in the House, through you, I would like to submit to him that if the need arises to distribute foodgrain on war-footing through FCI, then it should be ensured that this rotten wheat is not distributed among the farmers.

Finally, I would conclude by saying one more thing. U.P. has practically no power generation today. Whatever electricity is there, there is not proper distribution system for it. Canals have not been cleaned for a long time. In such a situation U.P. is the only State which is affected severely and it is not a matter of surprise. Unless and until long term plans are formulated and implemented to tackle these problems farmers and poor people will not be benefited. Hence steps on a war footing should be taken to implement these schemes.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajganj, U.P.): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am thankful that you have called me to participate in the discussion regarding flood and drought. It is ironical that even after 55 years of independence majority of the farmers and population of the country are compelled to depend on nature for their livelihood. After independence tall talks were made about progress but the fact is that even after 55 years of independence the House has been fulfilling its duty merely by discussing the issue of drought and flood every year. When we discuss this issue and fail to show positive result to the people then resentment against democratic system arises amoung common people which is a matter of concern for all of us.

The Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Water Resources are present here. Only two ministries are not sufficient to tackle drought and floods Various ministries must have co-ordination among themselves. We should take concrete steps to solve these problems. Today we are facing the situation of drought and flood due to imbalance in nature. The Minister of Agriculture is the son of that great Kisan leader who worked for creating new hope and trust among the farmers for the first time after independence. When Congress was in power at that time also he worked for creating a big force in politics throught hope and confidence. We expect that you should also come forward to create that hope and trust. We should honestly evaluate the situation, which has arisen today. Have we taken any initiative to solve these problems even after 55 years of independence? Israel, which is a small country, took the initiative for supply of foodgrains in peculiar circumstances. It can be an example for both of us. We are lucky that we have got good natural climate. Other countries of the world do not have such a good climate. Today a lengthy discussion on changing climate will take place. If we discuss that subject, it is my opinion that when we talk about environmental pollution and gradually move towards development then cretainly development will influence environment. Today increasing population is also playing an important role in affecting environment.

21.28 hrs.

[DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH *in the Chair*]

My colleague, Shri Shivraj, despite being a member of the ruling party, has honestly and clearly raised many relevant points. If we honestly want to redress the problems of the farmers, we shall have to honestly implement these programmes. We shall have to keep in view the impact of our policies on the people. Shri Shivraj has also made a mention of the crop insurance scheme. The premium of the crop insurance scheme may be enhanced, but it should be implemented taking into account on individual farmer as a unit so that the farmers may get its benefits. In the present scenario, we do not talk about increasing the price of sugarcane, paddy and wheat. It would be a great help to the farmers, if we are able to facilitate them sell their grains at minimum support price fixed for the purpose.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would now like to express my views on the scourge of drought. Due to climatic changes, the condition of drought and floods has prevailed. I would

[Kunwar Akhilesh Singh]

not like to repeat the lengthy discussion on drought, which has already taken place here. Through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Water Resources Ministers towards the fact that a large part of our country is affected by floods, because the glaciers are melting and the Himalaya is changing its geographical feature. In this very House, last year we had discussed that Uttar Pradesh is the biggest State of the country and Bihar is next in row. The rivers flowing from Nepal are ruining this area every year. If you leave the State Governments on their own to tackle this situation, then I think, it will be unfair.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it was said in this very House that the Government have constituted a joint group of Nepal and India, which will submit its report after visiting both Nepal and India. I would humbly like to submit that when I was the Member of Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly, our respected leader, Shri Janeshwar Mishra was the Union Minister of Water Resources, what he had told me during personal conversation is being said by the hon'ble Minister here in his reply. I would like to narrate my personal experience in this regard. My parliamentary constituency is situated on Indo-Nepal border. I went there during the last weekend. A heavy rainfall has taken place there. After seeing the rainfall, I was not in a mood to come back to Delhi. The fields were full of water. At that time, I apprehended that there was a likelihood of floods in my area, because the adjoining low-lying district of Kushinagar and Padrauna are already affected by the floods. There are many small nullahs in Nepal. If a survey is conducted in that regard, their existence can not be traced but the Government of Nepal is trying to change the nature of rivers by joining those drains. The Government should not take it otherwise. I demand that Central survey team should visit the area, or a joint Parliamentary Committee should be constituted for the purpose. The MPs of Nepal are themselves fed up with it. We have personally tried to talk to them. Therefore, a joint task force should be constituted, which may submit its report after conducting a practical study of it. The effective steps could be taken to control the floods.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, many of my colleagues have mentioned that Rs. 56,000 crore are being spent to construct highways in East, West and North-East corridors. We are not against the construction of highways, but if the Government is having resources, what should be their priority. We shall have to decide what are our priorities in the agriculture sector. It would be beneficial for the country if Rs. 56,000 crore are spent for making arrangements of drinking water and water for irrigation. It will not only be good for farmers, but for the entire humanity. The problem of water has posed a challenge not only to us but to the entire world, therefore funds for solving this problem should be allocated on priority basis. I do not know whether water is in the concurrent list or not. If it has not been included in it, then, through you I would like to urge upon the entire House to include it in the concurrent list.

With these words, I would like the Government to take initiatives in solving the problem of floods and drought.

SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN (Araria): Mr. Chairman, Sir, many State of the country are reeling under the scourge of drought and floods so much so that people say that they have never come across such unprecedented floods in Bihar, Bengal and Assam during the last few years. I have been informed, that the main canal emanating form Bhimnagar on Indo-Nepal border has got damaged at many places. The main roads of PWD, railway lines and national highways have been washed away, what to talk about civil hospitals and schools. The condition is so bad that people are unable to travel from one place to another. There is shortage of food and Kerosene oil and people are living in an atmosphere of fear and apprehension as to what will happen in the near future. The Government should try to find a way out so as to save people from rainfall and floods caused by the rivers coming from Nepal. The life of lakhs of people of 22 districts of Bihar has become miserable due to floods.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to submit that 90 percent of paddy sowing was done in our area. In some areas, 'Jute' and 'moong' crops were sown. The standing crops have been completely immersed. Through you, I would like to urge upon the hon'ble Minister of Agriculture that a high level committee should be constituted without delay, which may visit Bihar, Bengal and Assam and the Union Government should give maximum assistance to flood affected areas. I have been informed by telephone, that an hon'ble Member of Lok Sabha. Mohammad Anwarul Haque has got stranded in Shivhar and Sitamarhi due to prevailing flood situation. He wished to attend the House, but after walking 8-10 kilometres in water logged roads, he found that the dam is broken and roads are damaged. Hence, he is unable to attend the House. I would like to say that 80 percent population of our country is dependent on agriculture. But at the time of crop-sowing, 12-13 States of the country are affected by the drought and another 4-5 States by floods.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, you hail from a farmer's family, the hon'ble Minister of Agriculture too hails from a farmer's family. He is the son of the former Prime Minister of the country. Therefore, he is concerned about farmers. I would like to know as to what is the cost of fertilizers at the time of sowing the crops and what is the cost of crop, after it is harvested? The farmers uses fertilizers in his fields, irrigates them, puts in hard work, but does not get remunerative prices. Even after 55 years of independence the condition of the farmers of the country is still pathetic. Most of the members of Lok Sabha hail from farmers' families, but even after 55 years of independence, we have not been able to achieve desired results in the interest of the farmers, whichever political party may be in power, the condition of the farmers is miserable. The farmers are producing foodgrains for the entire country. We have not been able to ponder over the problems of the farmers the way in which we should have done. On the one hand the farmers are hit by floods and drought and on the other hand recovery of loans from the farmers will be started. Police personnel go to the House of the farmers to ask them to repay their loans. Crop Insurance Scheme is in operation in various States. But this scheme has not been implemented in Bihar. Today Bihar is facing devastation caused due to floods and drought simultaneously. Therefore, Sir, I would like to tell the Minister of Agriculture through you that the Government of Bihar is not in a position to make the payment of crop insurance which includes contribution of amount of the Union Government, the State Government and the farmers. Therefore, I would like to urge that the Union Government should certainly bear the share of the State Government towards the Crop Insurance Scheme so that the farmers could be benefited. Besides the Crop Insuarnce Scheme should be implemented in Bihar also for the benefit of the farmers. This Scheme is in operation in various States.

Sir, the rivers originating in Nepal and flowing towards India are causing floods in Bihar. At the time of carving out Jharkhand from Bihar a core committee was constituted. Both you and Shri Nitish Kumarji were the member of the committee. That was an all party committee and the members of that party called upon the hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and it was the first and foremost demand of the committee that in order to tame the rivers which are originating in Nepal and causing devastation in Bihar, a dam should be constructed at Chatra so as to check flood in the State and to generate hydel power which will immensely benefit the people of that region. Crops worth thousands of crores of rupees on lakhs of hectares of land are destroyed every year due to floods. The Union Government should formulate schemes to check floods and generate hydel power in that region and if it is done I am sure the people of that area will get rid of floods.

Sir, the hon'ble Minister of Agriculture held a meeting of the Agriculture Ministers of twelve States. In that meeting he advocated the interests of the farmers and laid emphasis on findign out permanent solutions to the problems of flood and drought. To achieve this goal we should formulate a long term plan.

We should formulate long term plans instead of short term schemes for the development of States and should find out permanent solution to the problems of floods and drought so that the country could prosper.

With these words I conclude my speech and thank you for giving me an opoortunity to speak.

SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI (Rewa): Hon'ble Chairman Sir, through you I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards Madhya Pradesh. Though the situation all over the country is bad for want of rain as most parts of the country did not receive any rains and there are some parts of the country which received excessive rainfall. A grave situation has arisen before the country which is a matter of concern.

Sir, the situation all over the country is more or less the same for want of rain. Therefore, there is no hitch to the Government in accepting the fact that there is acute water scarcity in various States and they are in the grip of drought. It is the need of the hour that the Government should give a healing touch to the farmers of the country. A number of speakers here have commended the Union Government. Till now the Union Government have not released even a single penny to any State for providing relief from drought but it apperars to me that the speakers from that side are adding insult to the injuries of the farmers.

Sir, the hon'ble Member of Parliament Shri Ramanand Singh whose Parliamentary Constituency is adjoining to that of mine raised the issue of drought here in the House. Mr. Chairman Sir, I endorse his point of view to some extent. It is true that Rewa, Sidhi, Satna, Shahdol, Panna and Chhatarpur are in the grip of drought. Shri Chauhan has also said the same thing and I support his contention also. But the question is that it is the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh who has been made the

[Shri Sunder Lal Tiwari]

target for criticism. Hearing that criticism it appears to me that the memory of Shri Ramanand Singhji is fading gradually. The hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee himself has appreciated his performance ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: If somebody touches the feet of the Prime Minister, he will definitely bless him. He bleasses one and all ...*[Interruptions]*

SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI: It was not blessing his performance was commended. Not only this, when the present President of your party Shri Venkaiah Naidu visited the State during his tennure as a Minister of Rural Development he could not help lauding his performance. Therefore, when I am saying that the memory of Shri Ramanand Singhji is fading gradually he should be serious and cautious about it.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: Mr. Chariman Sir, which of the doctors the hon'ble Minister of Agriculture propose to appoint to help him regain his memory.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Brahmibooti is used to regain and increase the memory.

SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI: Mr. Chairman Sir, almost all the districts of Madhya Pradesh are in the grip of drought and in several districts like Sidhi, Satna, Sahdol, Panna and Chhatarpur sowing of crops has been undertaken but in two divisions i.e. Rewa and Sagar sowing operations have not been started as yet and if sowing has been done at all it is one or two percent which is negligible and whatever sowing has been done is destroyed due to drought and the farmers have suffered huge losses. Loss of crop is coupled with shortage of water and the State is in the grip of drought for the last three years in succession. The Madhya Pradesh Government have sought assistance from the Union Government several times. The State Government demanded Rs. 256 Crore last year to deal with drought situation but the Union Government did not sanction even a single penny to the State for providing relief to the people. But the Chief Minister of our State hon'ble Shri Digvijay Singhji firmly stood by the farmers and provided maximum relief to them in adverse circumstances. Therefore, I would like to tell hon'ble Shri Ramanand Singhji and Shri Chauhanji that it is our right to get assistance from the Union Government. That is why we are demanding funds from the Union Government. But if the Union Government do not sanction funds to us, our Chief Minister Shri Digvijay Singhji is competent enough to deal with the adverse circumstances.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: Hon'ble Shri Sunder Lalji, 94.96 percent of the States's budget is spent on salaries. If the Union Government do not help the State the State Government cannot be urn. It is shameful that payment of Pensions have not been made in the State to the destitudes, handicapped and the aged for the last six months. The entire budget is being spent on salaries of officers and employees. Therefore, you should be ashamed of lauding the performance of that Government.

SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, we cah thrash out this issue when both the parties meet face to face. We should work jointly to deal with the present situation. Today the Union Minister of Agriculture and Union Minister of Water Resources are present here in the House and I want to tell them that the discussion on this issue is taking place belatedly. This issue should have come up for discussion on the very first day of this session. Now when will a decision on this issue be taken and when the Government will provide relief to the States?

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: The State Government of your party has not yet forwarded the list of drought affected districts.

SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, in order to prevent the situation from worsening further and to provied relief, the Central Government may immediately release atleast rupees 50 crore to the State Government. In this way, the State would get some funds otherwise the situation will deteriorate all the more. Everyone knows about the foodgrain situation there. A substantial part of land in my State in unirrigated. There is shortage of seeds. Next Rabi crop would also get ruined. The condition of farmers would worsen further if the Central Government does not give any assistance to the State. Atleast for one year the crop would remain badly affected. The question is that we are facing this problem every year. Madhya Praesh is in the grip of drought for the last three years due to failure of rains. Today even if the Central Government makes efforts to give them relief. ...*[Interruptions]*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI: It is matter to ponder over whether the farmers would get these funds. I would like to submit that a scheme should be formulated for this purpose. The Panchayati Raj system in Madhya Pradesh is quite strong. And through this system, we should make arrangements that the Panchayats should

automatically start the work of tackling the drought once the Central Government issues directions in this regard. Funds released by the Central Government would be sent to the State Government and the State Government would allocate these to the districts, which would then in turn formulate schemes and release the money to different areas. I fear that the money released would never reach the farmers.

Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi had visualized that through Panchayati Raj system most of the poor people, who live in remote areas, would get relief. I would like to submit that Panchayati Raj system should be fully utilized and Panchayats should be entrusted with the task to make India, drought free.

As far as the problem of drinking water is concerned ...*[Interruptions]* This is my last point. I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister of Irrigation that there have also been adverse effects of our policy of making available water. The Government have installed five or six hand-pumps in every village but wells have become dry. Poor farmers are suffering a lot since they cannot purchase hand-pumps costing Rs. 40,000.

I am not talking about the areas where the water table is high. Existing sources of water and the current methodology of water harvesting have definitely suffered. The well have dried. The plight of the farmers is a matter of concern as they cannot make arrangements for installing hand-pumps because their economic condition is not strong. There is no policy regarding installing of the hand-pump and anyone can install hand-pump at any place. On the one hand we are trying to develop new sources and on the other hand, old sources are becoming non-functional. I am not going into partisan politics while dwelling on this policy. The need of the hour is to discuss the issue threadbare and to formulate a policy of conserving existing sources of water.

I urge upon the Government to fulfil the demands raised by Madhya Pradesh Government under such adverse circumstances. Funds should be released by the Centre to the Madhya Pradesh Government. Moreover, funds of the last year may also kindly be released.

At the end, I wish to submit that even if the hon. Minister of Agriculture and the hon. Minister of Irrigation join hands and formulate a policy, they can neither give water nor foodgrains but can only provide funds. That is why all the desired arrangements cannot be made with those funds. And so, a long-term policy may be evolved that these two hon. Ministers, together, could provide foodgrains and also water.

SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY (Banaskantha): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I extend my thanks to you for having given me an opportunity to speak in the important debate on drought and flood. All the hon. Members are concerned over the situation arising out of flood and drought in the country. The Hon. Minister of Agriculture had called Ministers of Agriculture of 12 States, but unfortunately the Minister of Agriculture from Gujarat was not invited. In the entire discussion I heard that there is no drought in Gujarat. It was only Saurashtra that witnessed rains in the entire Gujarat. ...*[Interruptions]* When we repeatedly refer to Shri Narendra Modi then on this occasion also we should not forget Gujarat. Saurashtra witnessed rains for the first time but North Gujarat and Kuchh are such areas where during the last thirty years floods were witnessed only twice and all the dams are dry. My constituency Banaskantha, falling in the border area of Rajasthan is adjacent to the constituency of Sunder Lal ji and also the Pakistan border. This land is saline like the land of Kuchh, and only one crop is cultivated during the year on this land that too depending on the rain. In the present times water table in North Gujarat has gone down to one thousand feet. After first showers were received everyone cultivated crop but it is now getting ruined. Since the creation of Gujarat, famine and drought have occurred 22 times in the last forty years. ...*[Interruptions]*

MR. CHAIRMAN: What are your suggestions, please tell.

SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY: I am rising for the first time to speak. I would finish my speech within five minutes if given a chance to speak. ...*[Interruptions]* Please listen to me. I am being interrupted by both the sides ...*[Interruptions]*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please give the suggestions.

SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY: I will give the suggestions. We can solve our problems with the suggestions we have. If all the hon. Members extend co-operation problem of North Gujarat and Kuchh can definitely be solved. We have 30 dams which are dry. Sardar Sarovar project is pending for the last 40 years. We are reaping no benefits, only Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan are the beneficiary States. All the hon. M.P.s may pursue the Governments of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan to extend

[Shri Haribhai Chaudhary]

co-operation to us and clear all the outstanding dues. If the Sardar Sarovar project gets completed, the water from link canal would reach 30 dams and this would meet demand of water in North Gujarat and Kuchh and these areas would witness less number of famines and droughts.

Crop Insurance Scheme is very good but there are flaws in this policy as they calculate the average. Last year, I was given two percent insurance. Farmers paid Rs. 300 against insurance of Rs. 10,000 but we got Rs. 200. This shoud be improved.

NABARD lends money to the co-operative Banks at the interest rate of 7 percent. The State Co-perative Bank lends money to the Central Co-operative Banks at the rate of interest of 8 percent and the District Cooperative Bank lends money to the farmers at the rate of interest of 16 percent. Farmers get loans at the rate of interest of 7 to 16 percent. If the hon. Minister of Agriculture directs NABARD, then this 7 percent can be brought down to 4-5 percent and farmers would get money at the rate of interest of 12 percent, which would benefit the farmers.

22.00 hrs.

My second point is that the Government of Gujarat has decided to construct 24,000 check dams which would definitely benefit Bhavnagar, Saurashtra. In the relief works, irrigation should be given importance, as construction of roads would not solve the problem. I am of the opinion that under relief works construction of canals, check dams and other developmental works should be undertaken.

My second submission is that the agreement of the Indian Government regarding the river Indus has elapsed and recently Gujarat Government has written that at the time of Indus Agreement, it was agreed upon that water of river Indus would reach North Gujarat and Kuchh, but this had not happened till date. Recently, the Government of Gujarat has sent a proposal and I feel that it should be considered by the Government. The rate of interest of NABARD should be reduced. Regarding construction of check dams in hilly areas, there is one problem that the authorities do not give assurance for increasing even one feet of forest land. So the Forest Department should also state that if water level increases due to the construction of check dams the forest area would also increase. But the Forest authorities do not understand all this and they should also be convinced.

I reiterate that under relief works construction of irrigation facilities should be undertaken. Permission should also be given for construction of canals. I extend my thanks to you for having given me an opportunity to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Give suggestions within five minutes and finish your speech.

SHRI RAM PRASAD SINGH (Arrah): Mr. Speaker Sir, today we are discussing and debating on the issue of drought and flood in the country in the House. Drought and flood have become the permanent problem for the country. Discussions have taken place on drought and flood each year in last 10 years but to no avail. We are where we were 10 years before. There have become permanent problems for us. This House will find it hard to stumble on any remedies thereto. The Ministers are well aware of the circumstances and sent limitations as well.

You have called the Agriculture Minister of 12 specific States for which I congratulate Hon'ble Union Agriculture Minister present here. Bihar continues to be the most unfortunate State severely hit by drought and flood. 22 districts are flood hit and completely innundated. Road network in those districts has been badly damaged.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your suggestion? That conditions of severe drought and flood exists, has been accepted.

SHRI RAM PRASAD SINGH: I am giving my humble suggestions. Whenever you speak and, you first dwell on the background. You please allow us people to speak at least.

I would like to bring into the kind attention of the entire House that in Bihar 22 district are facing severe conditions of flood and 16 districts are badly hit by drought. To name them—Chapara, Siwan, Gopalgonj, Arrah, Bhogpur, Buxar, Caimour, Aurangabad, Gaya, Part of Patna, Jamuai, Lakhisarai, Shekhpura are western district are severaly drought hit. In fact, entire Bihar is drought hit. As you stated, on one side there are natural calamities like flood and drought and on the other, and Government is there. God knows what has happened to this Government? As all people know most of the M.P.s from Bihar belong to your party. People of Bihar have voted for you but what you are giving them in return is their open exploilation and are denying them of their legitimate right. The much awaited package is also not

being announced. All are out to destroy Bihar but the Government must know one thing there we all are united on this issue and also on the issue of railway zone and we are determined to fight it out. However, I would request the Government to be little forgiving and benevolent towards Bihar. I would just request that Bihar should get its due share of developmental assistance, not anything more, Bihar should get its due share out of the total revenue proceeds we collect and give to the Central Government. We must work out a permanent solution of floods. Our revered leader Shri Karpuri Thakur has suggested that all the rivers originating in Nepal and flowing through India should be desilted and digged deep and should be used for irrigation purposes and that can solve the problem. However, this suggetion has not been adhered to. Therefore, both the Government of India and Nepal should enter an agreement on this issue and resolve this issue. Soan canal system was put in place in the year 1875. At the time its likely span of life was estimated to be hundred years. But now it has completed one hundred thirty years. Its canals have shattered. The Bihar Government has asked several times to renovate this canal system which happens to be one of the largest canal system and caters to twelve lakh hectares of land. With renovation of this canal system, irrigation could be undertaken in districts like Bhojpur, Gaya, Patna, Jahanabad etc. mentioned by me earlier. We can have huge stocks of foodgrains provided floods are controlled and flood waters are taken to drought hit area. Then we could feed the entire State as well as eastern Uttar Pradesh. If we do not give foodgrains to Jharkhand then the people may have to face starvation. A large number of landless labourers and farmers are being adversely affected due to it. If it has to be resolved permanently then the plan mooted by the State Government involving the expenditure of 1600 crore of rupees originally, sent to the Union Government in the year 1992 should be cleared immediately. The original cost has escalated from rupees 1600 crores to 2200 crores of rupees. Several good projects have gone to Jharkhand after division of the State. We do not have any industries and what we have, is droughts and floods. Therefore, I earnestly request the Union Government not to mete out step brotherly treatment to Bihar.

Our Union Agriculture Minister is the worthy son of great son of India—Chaudhary Charan Singh. He is a veteran socialist and has been influenced by Shri Lohia. Therefore, the interest of farmers should be uppermost in his mind as one country is predominantly an agriculture country. The country will be prosperous only when our farming community becomes happy and prosperous. Indian soil is quit fertile and no where in the world such a fertile land exists. Every day a new crop is sown in the country. Bihar is faced with scarcity at electricity and there are also no industries. In Bihar only 400-500 M.W. of electricity is generated after creation of new State of Jharkhand, several power plants have gone to the new State. Our Soan canal system should also be made available for this purpsoe. The farmers should be supplied sufficient amount of power. Food for work scheme should be introduced in our State for the welfare of landless labourers. 'Takabi' loans should be provided to the farmers. Only 20 to 30 precent water is left in the Canals. The right crop season in Bihar is upto 15th August but water is not available. The farmers had sown Rabi crop in this season but the land had dried up and the seads have also gone waste. Therefore, loans should be waived, adequate power should be supplied and 'Takabi' loans should be given to the farmers. Our due share out of revenue proceeds should be given. Panchayat's 600 crores of rupees are outstanding which should be released to enable us to implement hard and light manual schemes through panchayats for poor people. Therefore, I would request the hon'ble Union Agriculture Minister to declare Bihar as drought and flood affected and call the State minister consultations so as to provide adequate sources to the State.

[English]

DR. C. KRISHNAN (Pollachi): Mr. Chariman, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to bring out the actual picutre of my constituency, Pollachi. Coimbatore and Erode districts fall in this constituency. The monsoon has failed and there is no rain for the past two years. Due to this, my area is drought-hit and the people are very much worried.

The farmers are facing a lot of problems due to failure of monsoon for the last two years, particularly in Coimbatore and Erode districts in Tamil Nadu. Due to failure of rains, the ground water has gone down to the level of 1000 feet. Many bore-wells have become dry and water is not available when new bore-wells are attempted even at a depth of 1000 feet. There are about ten lakh coconut trees in these districts. Coconut trees are long standing crops. It takes, at least, seven years to get yield from a coconut tree. In my Pollachi parliamentary constituency alone, about four lakh yielding trees have become dry and dead once for all. The small and marginal farmers are unable even to remove the dried up trees and to plant new saplings for want of funds. Further, the coconut farmers were suffering due to

[Dr. C. Krishnan]

poor yield caused by Ereophyte mite attack for about three years. Even for the poor yield, the farmers could not get reasonable price. The benefits of purchasing dry coconut or copra by Government have not reached the farmers. All these difficulties and the present severe drought conditions due to failure of monsoon have created great financial loss to the farmers. Hence, I would request the Central Government to provide Rs. 1000 per dried up and dead tree as compensation to the affected farmers to enable them to plant new saplings.

Further, the failure of monsoon has caused scarcity of drinking water in many places in Coimbatore and Erode districts. Hence, I would request that Coimbatore and Erode districts may be announced as drought affected districts and all remedial measures shoudl be extended to these districts on war footing treating this drought as a natural calamity on par with other natural calamities like flood, storm, earthquake etc.

The only permanent solution is to take initiative by the Central Government to link the southern rivers like Krishna, Mahanadi, Godavari, Cauvery, Vaigai and Periyar so that the entire South India may have sufficient water facility for drinking and irrigation purposes at all times for the future generation.

On 28th June, 2002, about a month ago, we conducted a massive rally of farmers in Pollachi, my constituency. Hon. Shri Vaiko, Member of Parliament and the leader of MDMK. Party led the rally with a great success. It is unfortunate that he is now in prison by the dare misuse of Prevention of Terrorism Act by the Tamil Nadu Government.

I have brought in the actual picture of drought position in my constituency. I would request the Central and State Governments to take proper action safeguard the interests of the farmers.

Sir, farmers have lost about four lakh coconut trees in my constituency. I would like to request that compensation for this should be paid by the Central Government and the State Government should declare Coimbatore and Erode districts as drought hit areas.

[Translation]

PROF. I.G. SANADI (Dharwad South): Mr. Chairman Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity for speak in the issue of drought and flood. I would like to say one thing-

"Ashok Vrachh Ki Chaya Me

Sashok Sita Ko Paya Tha

Aaj Ashok Chaakra Ke Dhwaj Ke Neeche

Sashok Kisano Ko Dekh Raha Hun."

The India farmer today, is looking up to the sky with hopes faced with severe drought and on the verge of destruction. The seeds sown and the hard work put in by the farmers have been wasted. The farmer provide subsistence which we can not pay back even in next seven lives. In the words of the first Prime Minister of India:

"Kisan Annadata Hai

Main Uska Rin Chuka Nahi Pata Hoon

Jab Main Duniya Se Chal Basunga

Tab Mujhe Chita Par Jalaya Jayega

Tab Mere Sharir Se Jo Rakh Banegi

Us Rakh Ko Desh Ke Kisano Ke Khet Me Jot Dena

Taaki Main Unake Rin Se Mukta Ho Jaunga."

Pt. Nehru had so great feelings. But today farmer is in a pitiable condition. The entire House is discussing and debating the issue and I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Union Agriculture Minister to the State of Karnataka. During the year 2000-2001, 20-25 districts out of 27 districts were badly hit by the drought and around 140-150 Tallukas were severly affected. Keeping in view these condition an all party delegation met the Prime Minister and submitted a scheme involving 900 crores of rupees. Therefore a team visited the area. I would not say that we were not destined to get this amount. I strongly feel that the conditions are much worst this year than the previous year. Shri. I.N. Krishna is the C.M. of the State. He would pay his level best to mobilise the funds however if we are able to get the Central assistance, our strengh will be redoubled. He has not demanded much. He has sought 132 crores of rupees for the agriculture sector. Whether sum or rupees 50 crores have been sought for horticulture. He has sought Rs. 21 crore for drinking water Rs. 17 crore for drinking water in the urban area, Rs. 25 crore for special nutrition, Rs. 22 crore for health care, Rs. 283 crore for farm related employment. Thus a total grant of Rs. 553 crore has been sought by him. I am grateful to you that they have invited the Chief Ministers of States to focus attention on this and they have also supported their

demand of the latter. This is really appreciable. Have we ever spent more than what we get out of the natural calamity fund? We have not received funds out of the NCR, so kindly get the same released. Ponds have dried up there and the farmers do not have work. We have not demanded much under the food for work programme. People of Andhra Pradesh are fortunate enough to have walked away with 30 lakh tonnes of foodgrains. We are not demanding that much. We demand only 8 lakh metric tonens. And if you could release Rs. 553 crore to Karnataka, that State would be grateful.

SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH (Mandi): Our hon. collegue Chautalaji has invited the attention of the House and the Hon. Minister through you towards the situation arising out of floods and drought in most of the parts of the country. I have risen here to participate in this debate. As you know I have continuously been a member of this House or the Upper House since 1990. Earlier, I had been a member of the Legislative Assembly twice from 1977. In my political career spanning 27 years, perhaps there had hardly been a year in whch a discussion was not held on the issue of drought or floods or any natural calamity of this nature.

It is true that we only discuss over these issues but we have not been able so far to formulate a long term scheme. It is also a fact that earlier we used to depend on the two kinds of crops in this country—the Rabi and Kharif but the farmers now have become so disappointed with these that relief has become more important for them now. There is a need to review whether the funds amounting to crores of rupees provided by India actually reach the eligible persons or not? When a natural calamity strikes, several private and social service institutions come forward to provide money and relief. It also needs to be looked into whether the money and materials provided by them in fact reaches the affected people or not. One thing is clear from the discussion that environmental changes are taking place all over the country. I would like to cite an example from Himachal Pradesh you know I hail from an area which is spread over 32 thousand kilometers. I remember my childhood days when in Himachal Pradesh more than half of the area including the Rohtang Pass used to remain cut off from the rest of the country for 8-9 months due to snowfall. And it used to be accessible only for 3-4 months. Now, the situation is just the reverse. Now it remains closed only for 3-4 months and it remains open for the rest of the time. When it remains open at times, the Border Roads Organisation wants to take credit that it has cleared the road of snow. There cannot be two opinions that the Border Roads Organisation is doing a yeoman's service there. But the sole credit for early clearance of the road goes to the climate which has undergone a change and snowfalls have become rare. Himachal is the source of several rivers yet droughts do occur there. Clonds brust off and on and floods also occur there. When floods occur in the plains, it is considered as a boon at times becuase they bring silt with it and it is very fertile for the crops. But in our areas, floods really play hovoc with them. Two years ago when the Sutlej river was in spate at Kinnuar, not only Kinnuar district but several parts of Mandi, Kullu and Shimla were also affected by it. The Himachal Pradesh Government succeeded in undertaking relief works with the assistance of the Union Government.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, as far as Himachal Pradesh is concerned, several hon. Members touched upon this issue and I express my gratitude to them. Himachal Pradesh is reeling under draught this year. Kharif Crops are normally Sown from the second week of May to the Second week of July. The rains' recorded this year were 40 percent as compared to the previous year. As per the figures, only 198 mm rains were recorded upto 22 July as compared to 324 mm. rains recorded during the corresponding period last year. The sowing of crops could not be undertaken anywhere, and if at all it was undertaken, the crops got withered. Our State is known for its fruit-harvests where besides apples several other fruits are also grown. The fruits borne by the trees this time are smaller in the size as a result of drought. The fodder problem has beocme so acute today that so fruitless branches of fruit bearing tree are being cut to serve as fodder for the cattle. There are several areas which face fodder problem during the winter season. In several areas the grass which grows in he months of Sravana and Bhadrapad is cut and collected and kept as fodder for winters. The farmers have lost their crops this year and their problem is where they will get the fodder from during the winter. What will they feed their cattle with during the coming winter? That is a big problem. That precisely is the reason that when the Hon. Minister called the meeting of Ministers for Agriculture, the Agriculture Minister of our State had to say that for our livestock we are even prepared to accept from the Centre even such stocks of foodgrains, which perhaps not fit for human consumption but are in abundance in the FCs godowns and 10 lakh tonnes of foodgrains out of that can atleast be used as fodder for cattle in Himachal. To may mind, perhaps no other State would have made such a demand. He had also demanded to provide subsidy on seeds and other equipments. It was told here that 113 hand-pumps would be installed ...*[Interruptions]* Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want your protection.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What kind of prrotection do you require.

SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, inspite of a political career spanning 27 years, I had to take the obligation of several persons and try hard to get my name included in the list of Speakers. Please give me two minutes more. Himachal Pradesh produces 5 lakh tonnes of fruits but it is likely to come down to 3 lakh 37 thousand tonnes this year. I do not want to go into the details as to how much money has to be spent on producing fruits. But you know it very well that the situation has come to such a pass that even in the month of Sravana watch is being carried by the trucks to make it available to the people. The sources of water have dried up. We had never come across the water crises of such a magnitude. Therefore, I would like to request you to pay special attention towards Himachal. This is the age of science. Some hon. Members have also mentioned the cause of environmental changes, depletion of forests being the reason. Whenever there are floods in the hills they cause havoc there and when the clouds brust there, they also cause havoc. We need to pay attention towards these problems. This is true that the Van Mahotsav is clebrated but only on papers. It is mentioned that so many saplings have been planted but how many of them manage to survive, we do not have figures in this regard. We do not have figures as to how many saplings survived out of those planted and the extent to which they have increased the forest cover. When crores of rupees are spent on the Van Mahotsav, I would like to request that a review shoud also be made as to how many saplings out of those planted survived. The people who perform well in the Forest Department should be rewarded and those who do not perform well should be punished.

Mr. Chairman, it is true that the soil Conservation Act came into foce in 1980 which envisages that if it is at all necessary to cut forests for the developmental works, the Forest Department should provide so much of funds to the work concerned department as to take afforestation to the extent trees were cut. Not only that, in the case of the large number of power projects undertaken in the private sector, the private sector companies provide funds for planting saplings to the extent of the number of forests destroyed in the process. But it is also a fact that this Act of 1980 is proving a major hindrance to the developmental works be it the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana or any other scheme. The amount of funds which other departments provide to the Forest Department should be spent on afforestation in the same division. But instead of spending the said amount in that division, the same gets transferred to the Consolidated Fund of India. As a result of which new forests do not come up in place of those cut. Therefore, I would like to request the Hon. Minister that it should be ensured that if forests are cut in any forest division to undertake developmental works, the funds received by the department, shoud invariably be spent on afforestation in the same division.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, one thing has repeatedly been said here about the National Calamity Relief Fund, I would like to say on this count that there is a need to bring uniformity in this regard. When a disaster somewhere is declared as a national calamity, and if anyone lose his life there, he is given one lakh rupees. But due to paucity of funds with the State Governments, they provide Rs. 25 or 50 thousand only. Not only that, if someone manages to save his life but loses all his belongings, he gets nothing by way of compensation. But if he loses his life, he is given Rs. 50 thousand. Therefore, a person who loses all his belongings in any national calamity should also be provided relief amount.

In the end, I would conclude with one thing that the hon. Member Shri Ummareddy ji has just said in this House that the Government have announced that a National Calamity Disaster Management Committee will be constituted in order to tackle such Calamities, so the sooner it is constituted the better it would be. I have a suggestion in this regard that this committee should have powers similar to those of the Election Commission. All the employees belong to the State Government but during elections even a Patwari or lowest level employee is directly responsible to the Election Commission. If someone is at fault, the committee should have the powers to take action against him through the respective State Government so that one could not be discriminated against and in exercise of those powers this committee may ensure that the relief reaches the eligible person only.

And now with one more thing I would like to conclude that waiver of loans is being talked of. You have the experience that loans upto Rs. Ten thousand extended to farmers earlier were also waived. But some persons managed to get it announced by the Government that those who had already paid their instalments were capable of paying and the waiver did not apply to them. The shrewd ones who did not pay even one instalment were given amnesty from repaying their loans. So if you are in a position to waive the loans, you must also waive the loans of those who have paid their instalments. Otherwise, the clever people will get all their loans waived and the honest people who want to repay their loans to the

Government will suffer. It would be proper if you do it. It is well and good if the waiver is for all, but if you can't, at least the interest should be waived so that they could repay the principal money. With this I conclude my speech. I thank you for giving me a chance to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The speech of hon. Member Shri Ramesh Chand Tomar may be made part of the proceedings.

*DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR (Hapur): Hon. Mr. Chairman, Sir, you have allowed me to speak out my views about drought. I am thankful to you. The monsoon session of the Parliament is in progress, but the monsoon is missing from the country. Due to absence of rains, there is a drought like situation throughout the country.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we all know that India is primarily an agricultural country. 70 percent of the country's population depend on rains for agriculture. Today the farmers of the country depend on conventional sources with rain water being the foremost among them. Irregular rains have created a drought like situation in the whole country. Due to delayed monsoon, the entire northern India is in the grip of drought. Not only the farmers but also the general masses of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Delhi and Punjab are affected by the increasing atmospheric temperature due to absence of rains. The common man are helpless. Paddy could not be sown.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the month of Aasadha has passed but not a single drop of rain has poured. The fields are parched, the farmers are sitting idle. The paddy crop is being delayed for watn of rain. According to the National Crop Forecasting Centre of the Ministry of Agriculture, paddy is cultivated on 406 lakh hectare area of the country, but this year only 20 lakh hectare area has been covered till now.

Hon. Mr. Chairman, Sir, the biggest blow of the delayed monsoon seems to be affecting the production of coarse grain. Till the end of June this year coarse grain has been sown on 4.18 lakh hectare area in the country as against 10.12 lakh hectare of the last year. This show that this huge gap is due to lack of rains. This also indicates that if such a situation continues, it will lead to serious consequences in future. We are afraid to conceive even as to what is in store for us.

*Speech was Laid on the *Table of the House*.

Hon. Mr. Chairman, Sir, when we discuss things in the context of meteorolgy and pass general meteorological information, we are very much surprised. Most of the forecasts made so far by the Department of Meteorology have proved false. In such a situation we are reminded of ghagh. Ghagh was a great meteorclogicst. His poems on environment are quite popular and more than 90 percent of them come true. There is a saying of his which we have tested and if you, too test it for yourself, it will prove to be true. He says:-

"Din ko baddar, raat nibaddar, bahe purvaiya jhabbar-jhabbar,

Ghagh kahen hum hoye viyogi, kuan khodkar dhoyen dhobi."

i.e. the day is overcast, the night is clear with the easterlies, this makes the poor farmer quite qpprehensive that famine or drought are going to fall in the coming days. On the basis of this the farmer used ot sow his crops and determine the plan for his crops. Ghagh has also said something about the coming of rains. The though of Ghagh was very much environment oriented. That's why he said:-

"ghele upar cheel jo bole, gali-gali mein pani dole" i.e. when the kite (bird) sits on the clay mound in the field of the farmer of starts screeching one should hope that heavy rain is about to fall. Similarly when the lizard is seen moving on the tree, it is said:-

"Ulte girgit unche chadhe, varsha hoye bhumijal budhai"

i.e. when the lizard climbs the tree with its back upwards, it should be hoped that heavy rain is going to fall, and it always comes true. Even today this village people observe such things and say that this or that is going to happen. Environmentalist Ghagh gave valuable meteorological information to the villagers through the languages of the masses. Had this been utilized properly, situation would have been quite different. It is quite unfortunate that the meteorological Department kept on announcing that the monsoon was coming but it did not come and due to short rainfall the entire northern India is drought affected.

The drought situation in Madhya Pradesh is even worse. Due to absence of rainfall the rural areas are faced with the crisis of drinking water. The seriousness of the water crisis in Bhopal is revealed to anyone who reaches the Badi Jheel. The Majaar where one could

[Dr. Ramesh Chand Tomar]

reach only by boat is dried up and converted into a tourist spot. In June this year 114 mm. rainfall was recorded in Bhopal whereas it was 276 mm. in the month of June during the last year.

[Translation]

A water-crisis has arisen in Bhopal since the water level has gone down in the main pond and Golab-dam.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it represent a Parliamentary Constituency of Uttar Pradesh. Forty-eight districts including the western part and Bundelkhand are in the grip of drought. Out of them 40 districts have received less rain-fall and 8 districts received normal rainfall. The problem of fodder and water for cattle has arisen due to the less rain-fall. NOt only paddy, but also 75 percent of Kharif-Crop has been destroyed and seventy percent of agricultural activitties has come to a halt.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the situation in Uttar Pradesh is very drastic. Total crops have dstroyed in Jalaun. Ninety-six percent of sowing could not be carried out in Agra. Bundelkhand is the worst-affected. Ninety percent and 84% of crops have been destroyed respectively in Hamirpur and Mahoba. The situation in Purvanchal is grim. The entire UP is crying. Hon. Minister of Agriculture himself came forward to announce in Lucknow on 20th July that the entire UP is in the grip of drought and hence this State should be declared as drought stricken. But the Government of Uttar Pradesh has declared only fifteen of its districts as drought affected. Entire western UP has not received rain but only three districts have been declared as drought stricken which is reflective of this fact that politics is being played on this score also.

Hon. Chairman, Sir, I am very much pained to say that although the entire UP is in the grip of drought and there is a cry every where, yet the officers there are observing negligence in dealing with the drought situation. The local administration of the affected districts have not sent report to the State Government till date and in anticipation the Government could not take any follow up action. What I support is a stern action against such officers. I would like to request the Hon. Minister of Agriculture to get it declared that entire UP is in the grip of drought and suspend all recoveries from the farming community by using his influence.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the entire UP is crying due to drought. Bundelkhand has received 65% less rainfall and thereafter comes western UP and Central UP which received 55% and 51% less rainfall respectively. As per a survey conducted under the auspices of Central Ground Water Board and the UP Ground Water Department, the water table in 29 districts out of 70 districts of UP has declined to a great extent. Out of these 29 districts, 13 districts are the worst hit and Ghaziabad and Meerut are among them. Handpumps are not functional. Tubewells have dried up. Water crisis has arisen in these districts and the cattle are dying in absence of water and fodder. The Government should come out with immediate and effective measures to overcome the situation.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the cattle in five States of northem India are dying due to the drought situation there. Wild animals and birds have also started dying. The economists are forecasting serious implications of drought on economic-activities. Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Punjab which are the major agricultural States are also likely to be affected. Last year, the economy registered a growth of 54% though the situation was not much different. This was attributed mainly to the bumper crops. Delay in monsoon will not only affect the agricultural activities, but it is certainly going to affect agriculture based industries also.

Hon. Chairman, Sir, last year also this Holuse discussed the devastation caused due to floods during its monsoon session. This time it is drought. Whether it is drought situation or flood, hon. members accomplished their task just by advancing some suggestions or resorting to criticising the Government and deriving satisfaction in the process. My opinion is that this would not work for long. A concrete strategy should be worked out to deal with the drought and flood like situation.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, a two pronged policy should be chalked out to deal with the drought situation, one for long term and one for a short period. The Government should reconsider the famous Dastur Yojana to link all the major rivers of the country. The Government had dropped it earlier on the pretext of huge cost involved therein. I think, this is not a deal going you to cost more than that of thousands of crore rupees, the Government spends every year to deal with drought and flood situation. To begin with the Government should try to link certain selected rivers of the country.

Sir, my second suggestion is that a permanent mechanism should be set-up at the Centre to deal with the drought and flood situations. A permanent organisation, likewise Central Drought Commission, or an Authority

should be set up to keep a constant eye on drought and flood situation and deal with them in an effective manner.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the drought situation inevitably leads to destruction of crops and the agriculture activities come to a stand-still. Crores of labourers working on farms, are rendered jobless and they have to face starvation. So, short term measures should be taken to help them out. Benefits should be passed on to them through various government sponsored Programmes such as Drought Relief Scheme and food for work scheme.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you very much for providing me the opportunity to speak.

SHRI TILAKDHARI PRASAD SINGH (Kodarma): Mr. Chairman, Sir, whenever discussion commences on drought and flood situation in this house, the problems being faced by farmers always find place therein and the Government also respond to that. But we still wait for a permanent solution to these problems despite the replies from the Government several times. Avoiding going into details, I just want to say that ...*[Interruptions]*

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Mr. Chairman Sir, Shri Jitender Reddy wants to submit his written speech.

SHRI A.P. JITHENDER REDDY (Mahbubnagar): Sir. I would not lay my speech, rather I would read it out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not waste the time of the House.

SHRI TILAKDHARI PRASAD SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that the decisions taken earlier and comprehensive schemes worth crores of rupees for the farmers announced in this House, have still not been implemented. The entire country is facing the problem of floods and drought. I would like to say that official notification has not been issued in regard to Jharkhand but it is true that paddy could not be sown in 22 districts of the State due to non-arrival of rain. There is a tribal dominated belt. Pulses and oilseeds could not been sown there. The Government must seek a report from the State Government to take stock of the situation.

I was comprehending about several Government sponsored schemes being launched for the welfare of farmers like the one which promises loans to farmers from the banks, but if you observe the trend, you will find that no bank grant loans to the farmers and hence they remain deprived of this facility. The Government in the past announced waiving of loans worth 10,000 rupees against farmers. The farmers understood that the arrears against them has been waived of by the Government but the true picture was still to appear before them? Now, they have been warranted to pay rupees fifty-thousand i.e. sum including the interest on the principal amount. I request the hon. Minister to review the situation and fulfil the assurance made by the Government because it is affecting the farmers community. If nothing more the amount of interest accrued thereon should be waived off.

There are several schemes to ensure water supply in rural areas. All of these schemes launched by the Government to solve the problem of drinking water in villages are not being effectively implemented hitherto. I would like to suggest that certain amount out of that fund may be diverted to install handpumps so that some rural areas could get drinking water. I would like to say one point regarding irrigation. Several big schemes like Kailkaro, Keso and Pechkhero are lying pending in Jharkhand from which I hail. Moreover, Konar dam scheme is lying pending. That too is not accruing any benefits to the farmers. What I like to suggest is that small wells and check-dams be constructed. You will get immediate benefits by doing so. Construction of Dam will take another 10-20 years. Even the older dams have not been constructed so far. How can the new ones be constructed? Several other problems crop up in between, sometimes objections by the Forest Department and so on. Fewer problems crop up in the matter of smaller schemes.

Through you, I would like to make another submission which can solve the problem of farmers. You facilitated them with credit cards and made arrangements for providing loans. You try to ensure, whether the assurances given by you are being implemented? Everything seems to be correct on the papers whereas when we go to the districts concerned and examine such things physically we do not find anything of the sort. This country has lot of expectations from the hon. Minister. You should ask the Members and officers to go in their constituencies and verify it. What is the use of such schemes if no benefits are being accrued? You should get this reviewed and try to find out as to what lapses have been committed.

Finally, I would like to say that entire country has been misled by the forecasts of the Meteorological

[Shri Tilakdhari Prasad Singh]

Department that it may rain on such and such day or the next day. seeds were sown by the farmers but there were no rains, the seeds dried and farmers suffered a heavy financial loss. You should also inquire into this sort of forecasting made by the Meteorological Department.

With these words, I conclude.

[English]

SHRI A.P. JITHENDER REDDY (Mahbubnagar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity. I thought that you will never given me the opportunity to speak because everybody was telling me to lay my papers on the Table but I did not do that. I am sitting since 12 o'clock to talk about drought situation. My wife is waiting for me to go to a party.

Sir, today we are discussing the drought situation. We come from the Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh. We can never get floods there.

As You know, the Irrigation Commission in 1972 had adopted the following criteria for identifying drought-affected areas in the country. The annual rainfall is less than normal in twenty years, out of the total number of years examined, and less than 20 percent of the cultivated area is irrigated. So, unfortunately in the Telangana region since 1901 till now we have never met this criterion. Every time it is less than what has been laid down by the Government. The rainfall has come down from 650 m.m. to 530 m.m. and there is always a drought situation in the Telangana region.

Even though the water level under the ground has come down from three metres to 30 metres, as you know, in Andhra Pradesh 80 percent people still live on agriculture. They are poor farmers; they have no other way to go. Every year they anticipate that there would be a very good rainfall. They go to the banks, take loans, plough their fields, sow the seeds and wait for the rains. But evey year there is a failure and these people accumulate even the interest payment year after year. All the agriculturists are having a bad time there. But this is the only profession that they can engage themselves in. Since ages from the times of their forefather they have been living with agriculture as their profession and they cannot leave it.

Some people tried to divert their profession after our Chief Minister, Shri Chandrababu Naidu took the State in the hi-tech way. We have also started exporting a lot of software from Andhra Pradesh. Unfortunately, after the 11th September, bad times set in as the exporting of software got stopped. Farmers who struggled to educate their children in order to take them out of agricultural profession as they were not getting anything from it and made them software engineers met with failure here also because their children have again become a burden on them.

Therefore, some measures will have to be taken to see that this drought situation is really eliminated forever. Many relief measures have been taken. Each and every time the Government comes out with some relief measures. The latest one is 'food for work'. The Central Government comes up with a scheme; we, the Member of Parliamnet, sitting so late in the Parliament, try to make some policies to give something to the States. Andhra Pradesh is number-one State in taking any scheme from the Centre. But the question is whether they are implementing it also. As you are aware, under the 'food for work' programme, Andhra Pradesh lifted 30 lakh tonnes of foodgrains and claimed that they are number-one in lifting so much quantity of foodgrain. But it has never reached the poor agriculturists. I demand that there should be a Central Committee. We have been telling that the Central Committee should come down to the States and assess the situation. The earlier Rural Development Minister Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu was in the process of getting an accountability test done. He was saying that in each and every village there shoud be a board kept at a public place wherein the scheme currently being undertaken should be specified, the amount received by the village should be mentioned on the board; and how much money has been distributed under the scheme should also be written on the board. But this kind of accountability test has not been there till date.

Coming back to the problems being faced in my own constituency, Mehboobnagar, it is the largest district in the Telangana region with a total of 18.4 lakh hectares.

Sir, I have two rivers, one is Tungabhadra and the other is Krishna, going through my costituency. These two rivers cross my constituency for 275 kilometres. But unfortunately we cannot even use 17 TMC of water. Sir, 811 TMC of water go through my consituency. It goes up to Srisailam and Prakasam. But we cannot even use 17 TMC of water because we do not have storage tank. The National Water Policy says that first Krishna basin should be utilised. But unfortunately there are no reservoirs in my district. All the farmers came here and met even the Prime Minister, but nothing has happened. I would request the Water Resources Minister to please go through the Mahboobnagar irrigation projects because

that is the entry from where Krishna enters into Mahboobnagar district from Karnataka. Then it goes up to Vijayawada. There we do not have any projects done.

There is no drinking water. Whenever we go into the constituencies, driving our cars, we can see the colourful vessels made by companies. They are all kept in a line near the tap. They expect that they will get some water from the tap. Whenever we go to the villages we feel shy to ask for a glass of water because we ourselves see a line which is a kilometre long near the tap.

I would request the Water Resources Ministry to come to the rescue of irrigation projects. It should come out with the relief measures. Whatever allocation is made to the State should be monitored properly. It has to be ensured that the end user gets it. It is not enought if the papers say that such and such State has picked up so much. We should see where it has gone; into whose pocket it has gone into.

We have modern technology. We are going in for so many things. As Shrimati Sudha Yadav said, we are trying to lay a pipeline from Oman to India for crude oil. We are trying to lay a pipeline between Iraq and India. Why can we not go in for latest technology in this matter also? I do understand the difficulties. When I was abroad for 25 years, when there was no rain, they used silver oxide in the clouds to get artificial rains. They used to get artificial rains so that it could be used for at least drinking purposes. The ground water level also could come up. I would request the Agriculture Minister to please see how latest technology could be use in order to rescue this drought-hit country. Thank you very much for this opportunity given to me.

I also would like to lay my speech on the Table, Sir, as Shri Kirit Somaiya wanted to do.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: When he has already spoken. There is no need to lay his speech again.

[English]

SARDAR SIMRANJIT SINGH MANN (Sangrur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak on the drought and flood situation in the country. The monsoon very frequently has played truant with the country. It ha sdevastated the Punjab State which is the food bowl and granary of India. The situation in Punjab is so bad that horticulture has failed and milch cattle are dying. Farmers, seeing that they cannot feed the cattle, are selling their cattle to slaughter houses and butchers of Saharanpur. The forest land is also drying up. Widdlife without the water holes in the forest is dying. *Basmati* rice has not been sown, which is the main cash earner and foreign exchange earner. Dairy farming has also been finished. Citrus fruit is falling off the trees. The Punjab farmer feels so ruined that he is committing suicide. What solutions can we offer him? Punjab cannot do anything to ameliorate the conditions of the farmers. Let the Central Government cooperate in this matter with us. From 1947, the country has followed an impractical and unproductive foreign policy with the Islamic States with the result that our borders to the Islamic countries at Wagah and Hussainiwala in Punjab are consistently closed. We cannot trade our agricultural goods for the natural gas of Pakistan and its electricity that we can import. If the borders are open, we can sell our agricultural products to the Islamic countries and the Central Asian Republics.

The Defence Policy also has some deficiencies because of lack of coherence in the foreign policy. Our farmers have been facing a drought-like situation for the last eight months since the Indian Army was deployed on the borders of Punjab. Our three border districts Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Ferozpur have agricultural lands and they have been occupied by the Indian Army. It does not allow them to grow crops. Paddy cultivation has been stopped. The land mines that have been laid on the border hinder farming operations in Punjab. The BSF does not allow the farmers to till the land at the Zero Line. We need compensation for this. The Indus Water Treaty that was signed years ago gave unfettered powers to Pakistan to take the waters of the three rivers—the Indus, the Jhelum and the Chenab. But the river waters of Ravi, Beas and Sutlej, which form a part of the India's Punjab seep into Pakistan. We need Central Assistance to build dams and reservoirs on these rivers so that we can preserve the flood waters and not allow them to go into Pakistan. They can be used within Punjab and the surplus waters can be given. At present, waters going into Rajasthan and Haryana from Punjab are not in accordance with the Constitution of India.

Under the guise of drought conditions, there have been suggestions made in this House that the Constituional arrangement that waters are a State subject should be put on the Concurrent List. We do not want any tampering with the Constitution. We are against the changing of the riparian principle in favour of other States. We do not have enough water for our own State. So, we

[Sardar Simranjit Singh Mann]

cannot give it to any other neighbouring State. Therefore, we do not stand for a change in teh Constitution. Waters are a State subject. We want the waters to remain a State subject.

The farmer needs loans for boring of his wells because the water table has shrunk. Moreover, we want the Central Government to waive off all the loans of the farmers just as it has waived off the loan of the industrialists. Till the time the loans cannot be waived, repayment of loans should be suspended.

The question before Punjab is about having more power. We do not have hydro-electricity. We do not have coal reserves. So, we need atomic power, atomic power stations to power the Power Grids. Just in the Europe, we need more atomic power for the survival of Punjab's agricultural economy.

Sir, we have a river called Ghaggar, which forms the boundary between Haryana and Punjab. Every year it floods thousands of acres of Haryana and Punjab. We want Central assistance to tame and harness this river, which is called the sorrow of not only Punjab but also that of Haryana.

Sir, in my short speech I would like to say that I represent the entire strength of the Akali Dal. We find that the Agriculture Minister is working hard. He should try and get the Army out of the border from Punjab so that our economy does not suffer because we want open borders with Pakistan and trade with the Islamic and Central Asian countires.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE (Malegaon): Mr. Chairman, Sir, discussion under Rule 193 in regard to drought and flood situation in the country is going on in the House. I thank you for providing me an opportunity to speak.

Something devastating happened Dahanu in Thane district of Maharashtra in the month of July. Where 75 milimetres of rains recorded on a single day, which disrupted life causing loss to the life and property to the tune of crores of rupees. Rains and sea caused heavy damage to the crops and houses. Tribals suffered even more. The compensation and assistance provided by the Maharashtra Government is not sufficient. So it is my earnest request through you to the hon. Minister of Agriculture and hon. Minister of Finance to provide maximum help by sending a Central Committee there.

Flood and drought are, of course, natural calamities but are made more complicated by human interference and the Government. The rain water that fall on the earth flow into the sea. It is imperative to think upon the ways and means to make it useful for the agriculture and power by harnessing water. Hon. Balasaheb Vikhe Patil ji is present in the House. Onece a committee was set up under his Chairmanship and I was made a Member of that Committee. He gave very good suggestions at that time that there is one river flowing westward in Nasik district the direction of which should be made eastward, since entire water of the river goes into the sea and is of no use. Hence, he gave very fruitful suggestions. The Maharahstra Government has formulated certain schemes in view of those suggestions but due to lack of funds, the proposal is lying unimplemented. I urge upon the hon. Minister and the Union Government to contemplate upon providing maximum assistance in regard to this scheme. You may recollect Sir, hon. Hukam Deo Narayan Yadav ji is also sitting here, that Morarji Bhai had called his close confidants one by one and asked them about their demands. I kept a demand about irrigation water, there are few tribal IAS Officers and officers of Maharashtra Cadre, so there was a demand to start a course in Nasik. People complained about deforestation so a decision was taken to set up a Forest Development Division. We also raised the issue regarding deforestation. We had only these three demands. He commissioned Surjeet Singh Barnalaji to Nasik to immediately look into it as to what was going to on there and for irrigation certain 55 big and small dams were constructed.

23.00 hrs.

Even today my area ranks first in the vegetables that are exported from Maharashtra. Morarji Bhai used to say that the work must go on. Funds should be immediately released and schemes should be immediately implemented. It was because of this approach that we got drinking water and irrigation water. Morarji Bhai used to sit here. Once he said he would make arrangements for taking the waters of Ganga and Southern rivers to drought hit areas, so that the problems of water is met. Then a member pointed out the problem of funds. Upon which he replied that as long as he is there no such problem would crop up. That Government was outsted so did the schemes. My request is that there is a need to give it a thought.

There are 36 districts in Maharashtra. 33 districts were hit by drought during the year 2000, but all the districts are affected by the drought during the current year. I belong to Nasik area where there are 15 districts. It did not rain even a single day there. In the beginning there were some rains but now it is totally dry. The farmers there sold their crops but it did not grow and entire crop was hit by drought. There is scarcity of drinking water, there is no fodder for cattle. Farmers are worried. This is my request to you to immediately send a team there, to take a stock of the situation in Nasik and Maharashtra.

Lot of water flows into the sea. That water is neither utilised for drinking nor for irrigation. We should make some arrangements so that it is made available to people and to agriculturists.

[English]

SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA (Kolar): Sir. I thank you for giving me this opportunity. I would not take more than five minutes. There are only four or five points that I want to mention before this august House. Our hon. Minister belongs to the farming community. He has to take some drastic steps to protect the interests of the farmers in this country. We are all with him on this particular issue. Irrespective of party affiliations, the entire Parliament and the country are with him. He has to do some reformation to protect the farmers of the country.

How would it be done? I would like to suggest something. The global weather is increasing the heat by two to three degrees Celsius because of pollution from factories, petrol and diesel. What is the remedy for this problem? The solution lies in growing more trees. In Kannada, there is a saying:

> If there is a tree, there is rain. If there is rain, there is a crop. If there is a crop, we have food.

How are we to grow more trees? I would like to inform the hon. Minister that in my State, Karnataka, more than 50 priests belonging to different religions—Fathers from various Churches and *Maulvis* from *Masjids*—would be meeting together under the Chairmanship of Sri Sri Bal Gangadhar Swamiji of the Adi Chunchana Giri Math.

They have formed a Committee—the total population of Karnataka is 5.5 crore—and have decided to plant 5.5 crore trees. They have chalked out a programme in this regard. They have also asked some money from the MPLAD Fund Scheme. Now, they have decided and already started the work in this regard. They have to complete this programme in Karnataka and then they will coordinate with other States also.

So, my submission to the hon. Minister is, why not find a way out to have such programmes in the whole country. We have population of 100 crore. We can take the help of educational institutions and various departments to achieve our targets. The hon. Minister can chalk out a five-year programme and within this period we can have around 100 crore trees planted in the country. If he makes up his mind, it will be easy and that will save the country from drought. But we have to find a way out.

The next important issue is how to control the floods. Floods can be controlled by linking all the major rivers, like Ganga with Cauvery or Mahanadi with Cauvery. This way you can give water to the whole country and we can see the dream of Mahatma Gandhi fulfilled that food and shelter be given to the last person of the country.

We cannot give jobs to all the hundred crore people of this country at present. The NDA Government has announced creation of one crore jobs every year, but I do not think they will achieve this target. If you can achieve, we will welcome the efforts taken by the Government, but we have to solve the other acute problems, like food, unemployment, that the country is facing. We have to ensure that everybody gets shelter, everybody gets employment, everybody gets food in this countrry. Of course, it involves a huge expenditure but we have to ensure that for every citizen of the country. I think, under the hon. Minister's leadership we can achieve some of the targets.

The hon. Minister of Agriculture belongs to a family which belongs to farming community. His father has done remarkable work for the *Kisans* of this country. We can never forget his achievements and his contribution to this country. What to talk of our generation, nobody can forget what Ch. Charan Singh has done for this country. The hon. Minister has to do the same thing for the farming community. It may involve huge funds but we have no other way out and before spending so much of money, we need to have a comprehensive plan. Linking of various rivers should also be considered in that plan. That will solve most of the problems of the country. I think, the hon. Minister has taken a note of it.

[Shri K.H. Muniyappa]

Crop insurance is another important thing that needs our consideration. We have to involve the farming community and have to see that compulsory crop insurance must be there. There should be uniform electricity price in all the States. For that you have to give encouragement to hydroelectric projects and there should be equal power distribution to all the States and every farmer should have a price limitation, otherwise it will be difficult for his survival.

I must congratulate the Government for giving a minimum support price to the farmers. With the help of the support price for so many crops in Karnataka announced last year, lakhs of people belonging to farming community survived. We can never forget that. Otherwise, they could not have sold their produce in the market. The price as well has also stabilised in the market. I would request the hon. Minister to double the amount to be allocated in the Budget for support price in the interest of the farming community.

These are some of the important points which I have placed before the hon. Minister and this august House and I think the hon. Minister have made a note of them. I have also prepared a note on some of the problems being faced by the farming community and some issues relating to droughts and floods. With the permission of the hon. Chairman, I would like to lay it on the Table of the House.

*Sir, the country is moving through a phase of serious drought situation. Seventy per cent of the area has not received any rainfall so far. Monsoon is coming to an end, so far farmers are unable to complete the sowing process. Failure of Monsoon may lead to a serious set back for the nation. We have to be equipped to face the situation.

I would request the Minister of Agriculture to inform the House about the steps taken by the Government of India to face the serious drought situation. People are going miles together to fetch drinking water. Reservoirs are drying away in most parts of the country.

The lethargic attitude of the Central Government is causing serious concern for State Governments. Karnataka has been neglected by the Central Government. An all party delegation from Government of Karnataka under the Chairmanship of Shri S.M. Krishna, Chief Minister of Karnataka met Hon'ble Prime Minister, Hon'ble Agriculture Minister and other Ministers last year and submitted a memorandum and requested for the release of approximately Rs. 900 crore to tackle the drought situation, but the Union Government is least bothered even to reply to the request.

Due to hailstrom, Karnataka farmers have lost approximately Rs. 200 crore in the last year. The Government of Karnataka has submitted a memorandum to the Government of India but thus proposal has also met the same fate.

An amount of Rs. 78 crore which is the amount earmarked for the Government of Karnataka was released for the year 2000-2001 as calamity relief fund; it is surprising to know that the BJP leaders have repeatedly addressed the Press to inform this release, which is purely the entitlement of the Government of Karnataka.

This year, Monsoon is not courteous on Karnataka. On 23.07.2002, 81 Taluks have been declared as drought affected taluks by the Government of Karnataka.

On 24.07.2002, Hon. Revenue and Agriculture Ministers of the Government of Karnataka have described the seriousness of the drought situation in Karnataka in Agriculture Ministers' Conference.

Since three years, we have been facing drought in many districts of the State, simultaneously we are submitting proposals every year to the Union Government.

It is unfortunate to say that it has become a mere formality; Karnataka all party delegations have been neglected by the Union Government. I am sure, this is because the Congress Government is in power in Karnataka. This kind of step-montherly attitude will disturb the Centre-State relation in future.

Most surprisingly, you are announcing packages to Andhra Pradesh. One phone call from Hyderabad has been more effective than the Karnataka Government delegation!

You have allotted approximately 30 lakh tonnes of foodgrains to Andhra Pradesh but three lakh tonnes of foodgrain to Karnataka for Food for Work Programme, what is the yardsticks applied for the allotment of foodgrains. Many schemes have been hijacked by Andhra Pradesh. This is not my allegation but the Government records supplied to MPs are showing the figures.

This year so far, Government of Karnataka has spent approximately Rs. 45 crores for providing drinking water

..... Speech was laid on the Table of the House.

facilities and other immediate requirements; approximately Rs. 6 crore has been earmarked to give subsidy on seeds to farmers.

District Collectors have been given power to take decision immediately to tackle the situation such as attempt to suicides and other extreme steps by farmers.

You are aware that due to very low rainfall in Cauvery delta, water levels in Krishna Raja Sagar dam are alarmingly low. This has caused a serious concern for the farmers of Karnataka as well as Tamil Nadu. We have lot of sympathy for the farmers of Tamil Nadu also, because of myself being a farmer, I can understand the problem of a farmers of any State in India.

Added to the woes of Karnataka farmers, the prices of silk, arcanut, Coconut, vegetables have come down drastically. Farmers of south Karnataka are seriously affected by falling silk prices. Last week Hon. Textile Minister has announced to farmers to extend all kind of help, but so far there is no Government order in this regard. Last week, Hon. Chief Minister has met Hon. Prime Minister and other Ministers concerned to request for a financial package in this regard. Therefore, I want an assurance by the Minister to what is the actual help the Union Government will extend to the farmers of Karnataka.

Every year we have been facing either drought or floods in most of the States. This is high time that Government should apply its mind for long term projects. I hope the following points would be helpful for Government:

1. Linking of Ganga-Cauvery rivers through this project needs huge investment, it will be a dream project of the country and this project will lessen the floods in north India and increase the area of irrigation down south.

2. Renovation of Tanks: Lakhs of Tanks have dried away due to poor maintenance and improper supporting canals. The speciality of these tanks in Karnataka is that they have been connected to each other through canals by excess water and even they will form a river after flowing some distance.

Government of Karnataka has already started an initiative to renovate these tanks with the help of World Bank financial assistance. I would like to mention that in this matter also, the Union Government has intervened and ordered a ban on the work citing that these tanks fall in Cauvery area. This is really a meaningless decision and it will retard the growth of the State.

I belong to Kolar District in Karnataka which is my Constituency which has got approximately 4000 tanks. All of them have been constructed in such a planned manner that even today if properly renovated and maintained, these will be able to feed the fields for all 365 days.

My district has been a dry district, time and again, we have requested for all round development of the District:

I would request the Rural Development Minister to plan for a comprehensive project to renovate the tanks. If an amount of Rs. 200 crore is allotted to Kolar, major tanks can be renovated. I am sure the District can be a model district.

Drought monitoring cell: There should be a drought monitoring cell under a separate Ministry. This Ministry should look after drought and floods and its management. Every year during floods and drought, these issues are discussed, but no permanent system has been evolved so far. The existing calamity relief fund is not sufficient to tackle any situation; men and machinery are also required to help the flood or drought victims. We can utilise the services of para security forces such as Home Guards, Civil Defence Personnel, Anganwadi workers Teachers and we can also create a cadre to tackle immediate serious situation.

In view of the above few points, I demand the Government to take maximum possible steps immediately and to set up a permanent disaster management group so that the country can tackle any serious situation. I would request the Hon. Prime Minister to intervene and an amount of Rs. 100 crore as a special case be released to Karnataka as interim relief.

I also request the Hon. Minister to intervene to clear the pending proposal of rs. 900 crore submitted to the Union Government in the last year.*

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (Kutch): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you very much for allowing me to take part in the discussion on drought and floods in various parts of the country.

A general impression is carried that as if Gujarat does not have drought. My constituency, from where I come, that is, Kutch district is so unfortunate and is a victim of almost all the natural calamities—drought, cyclone and earthquake. Since last three years, we are facing

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..... Speech was laid on the Table of the House.

[Shri P.S. Gadhavi]

drought. In the period of the last 52 years, after Independence, my constituency had faced drought for about 33 times. In 1998, disastrous cyclone hit Kandla, in which we had lost about 3,000 precious human lives and poor farmers from Anjar, Mundre and Mandvi Talukas had lost more than 3 lakh fruit bearing trees. Thereafter, in 1999 cyclone, western parts of Kutch district—Abadasa and Lakhpat Talukas were also hit. At that time, we lost more than 50,000 valuable cattle heads. In both these cyclones, movable and immovable properties worth crores of rupees were lost. On 26 January, 2001, when the earthquak hit, Kutch was affected. Five bit towns and more than 181 villages were totally ruined. Sir, 581 villages were affected in that earthquake and our farmers had lost everything.

In this earthquak, we lost more than 18,000 precious human lives and property worth thousands of crores of rupees. Till now, we have not been able to rehabilitate and restore the loss suffered because of this earthquake.

Sir, we are facing threat of severe drought his year. This is the third year of drought situation in Kutch. I have obtained the figures of rainfall from the Collector. I have been given the figures up till 20th July. There are 10 Talukas in Kutch. The fitures of the rainfall in these 10 talukas are: Bhuj-53 mm; Mandvi-18 mm; Mundra-12 mm; Anjar-51 mm; Bhachau-82 mm; Raper-137 mm; Gandhidham-55 mm; Makhtrana-31 mm; Abadadas-40 mm; and Lakhpat-40 mm. So, the average rainfall in Kutch district comes to only 38 mm, that is about 1.5 inches. If we consider the average rainfall figures of two Talukas Bhachau and Raper, then it comes to 51.9 mm, that is about 2 inches.

A general impression in carried that Gujarat has got rain. Unfortunately, Kutch district, from where I come, and certain Northern Gujarat areas have not had any rain. In ten districts of Gujarat, the average rainfall is less than 30 percent. They are: Anand, Banas Kantha, Gandhinagar, Kutch, Mehsana, Narmada, Panch Mahal, Patan, Porbander and Sabar Kantha. They have not had any rain and the average rainfall is less than 30 per cent.

Sir, my request to the hon. Minister of Agriculture is to depute a high-level team to Gujarat to conduct on-the-spot survey to assess the situation faced by the farmers because of drought, particularly in Kutch. I do not know whether the Agriculture Minister from our State was called or not but he was not present in the Meeting. So, our Agriculture Minister should be called or a team may be deputed from here. As the other Members have said, please direct NABARD and other scheduled and co-operative banks to forego or postpone the recovery of dues and interest from stressed farmers.

Another request to the hon. Minister is that necessary amendments be made in the Central Relief Fund because Central relief generally gives relief to small and marginal farmers, who have got land less than two hectares.

In my constituency, we have got barren land. Even those farmers who have got more than 10 acres or 20 acres of land are not in a position to sustain their families. So, some relaxation may kindly be given. Otherwise, those farmers who have more than two hectares of land will not get any yield. Even the farmers who are having 40 acres or 50 acres of land are not in a position to sustain themselves.

My constituency is, in area, third largest constituency in the country. The area of my constituency is about 45,000 square kilometres. We have got very good grassland. We have got a large number of original breed of cattle, namely, cows, buffaloes, goats, sheep, camels, etc. Previously also, the Railways had given subsidy for transportation of the fodder. Transportation of the fodder was made free. We can get fodder only from South Gujarat which is about 700 kilometres away. My only request to the hon. Minister is that this type of free transport facility for fodder by Railways be made.

There is no drinking water for two crore people. The only permanent solution is Narmada. If Narmada dam is constructed or completed as early as possible, then only the North Gujarat and Saurashtra parts can survive. Our ground water level has gone down from 300 feet to 500 feet. We are not having any ground water.

Lastly I would like to submit that whenever any relief works are done, the re-changing works should be given priority. In that, people's participation should be there. Whenever you give any work, it does not yield any result. Many times, crores and crores of rupees are being spent. Even then the position remains the same. So there should be people's participation in the recharging scheme.

In Gujarat we have started Sardar Sarovar Sahbhagi Yojana. So people will participate; and re-charging facility may kindly be taken up.

I am submiting a written note so that it can go on record.

Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

*At times of drought, many farmers have even lost their labour and seed when they received first little rainfall. To compensate them, subsidised power, certified seeds fertilizers and loan facilities be given to them.

Comprehensive package be declared to help the poor farmers who have suffered heavily due to drought situation*.

[Translation]

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE (Bilaspur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, twelve states including Chhatisgarh are reeling under the fury of floods and severe drought. I would like to give my suggestions only in the circumstances in which the debate is going on today since we don't have much time. When there was famine in Chhatisgarh last year, it was provided with one crore rupees and rice as well. Funds were also provided under the Ganga water scheme. Indira Gandhi scheme and Ganga water scheme were launched there. Construction of roads was undertaken in the name of Rajiv Gandhi and it was later known as the Jawahar Lal road. Dams were constructed in the name of Jawahar Lal and Rajiv Gandhi. The Government should ensure that the funds which are provided from the Central Government's head are fully utilised. Last time 100 per cent funds were provided. However, the State Government also shares 25 per cent amount. But this time around also, the Central Government should provide 100 percent amount since 12 States are reeling under devastating floods and severe drought conditions. What I want to say is that the Central Government should provide 100 per cent amount. If the State Governmet also wants to contribute, it should take relief work separately with its own funds. The relief work with the Central assistance should be undertaken simultaneously.

We are facing acute drinking water problem. The water table is depleting there and steps should be taken to augment the same. Rs. 30 thousand are spent on the boring of tubewell. Hand pumps are installed in villages. But there are ponds in most of the villages. The Government should take concrete steps to augment the water table to enable to tide over the drinking water problem and people will aso get water for bathing. Boring of tubewells shoud be undertaken where there are ponds. Special attention should be paid towards relief works. Tubewell water can be utilised for irrigation purposes. The entire crop has been damaged in our State.

The credit card scheme has been introduced to tide over the problems of farmers. Kishan credit cards should be distributed to all the farmers in the twelve States which are reeling under drought so that the farmers could start their own work to earn their livelihood and purchase inputs for farming purposes. The farmers would not be able to get compensation if the premium amount is not distributed under the Crop Insurance Scheme. In such circumstances, I would like to appeal to the Central Government that the premium amount should be deposited where people are affected by the floods. Farmers should get reasonable amount as compensation under the Crop Insurance scheme. The farmers would be grateful to the Government for this benign act. At times, farmers are ignored. If there is a Congress government in any State, the representatives of the BJP are not given due attention there and in such circumstances, the peoples representative have little role to plan. We cry at the top of our voice here in the House demanding funds for our area, but virtually we are non-entity in our areas if our party's Government is not in power in our respective State. This situation should be given due attention. If some work is done there, it should be on recommendation. When the Central Government provides the funds the Chief Minister of Chhatisgarh should not be at liberty to avoid monitoring of any meeting anywhere. Every month a meeting of MPs or MLAs should be called and work should be carried out with the recommendation of MPs. In areas where no work is being done. There should not be any step-motherly treatment. This money is given for the development of the common man and not for the development of a political party. It is true that wheat and rice are selling at Rs. Two and Rs. three respectively. It is true that the people below poverty line are getting the benefits, but in today's adverse condition all the poor people of the villages should get this benefit. The handicapped people who cannot work, and are affected by drought, cannot fend for themselves, so relief should be given to them. A huge quantity of foodgrains is rotting in the godowns. The people of our party referred to this. If foodgrains are not distributed, they will loot the godowns. I urge the Government to distribute the foodgrains before the godowns are looted. The hon'ble Minister of Agriculture is paying attention to this. He convened a conference of Agricultural Ministers from many States. Rs. 400 to 600 crore should be released immediately as grant to the States that sent their proposal first, so that people could be able to have the means to live their lives.

SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN (Basti): Mr. Chairman, Sir, first I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

*.....*Speech was laid on the Table of the House.

[Shri Shriram Chouhan]

Drought has become the burning problem of the country. Majority of the States in the entire north India have been engulfed by the drought. The Government of India is quite sensitive to this issue. Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture has also shown his deep concern by calling a meeting of the Agriculture Ministers of the drought affected States. In my area of Basti, Gonda, Maharajganj and Siddharth Nagar, the sugarcane growers have problems. Their sugarcane is drying up in the fields alongwith other crops. Though paddy saplings have been planted in the 'Tarai' area, the paddy crop is drying up for want of water. The borewells should be made operational and water should be taken to this area through canals. Huge amounts of money are outstanding for payment to the sugarcane growers. Some farmers grow crash crops and got remunerations early. However, the sugarcane growers sell their yield on 15 days' credit. Their dues are not paid fully year after year. Their large amount of sugarcane dues are outstanding on mills including government mills. I request the union government to direct the State government to pay up the outstanding dues to the sugarcane growers. The state governments should introduce "food for work' schemes so that the State Government could take effective steps towards centrally sponsored schemes. The loans of farmers should be waived off. Loan recovery should also be stopped. All the taxes imposed on irrigation should be withdrawn. Arrangements should be made for providing fodder to cattle.

With these words I conclude my speech and also extend my sincere thanks to you for giving me an opportunity to speak here in the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Debate is over. Tomorrow, Shri Ramdas Athawale will speak and thereafter hon'ble Minister for Agriculture will reply. The proceedings are therefore, adjourned till 11o' clock on July 26, 2002.

23.25 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday July 26, 2002/Sravana 4, 1924 (Saka)